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READ AMERICA FIRST

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By ROBERT LITTELL

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Essay Index Reprint Series

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TO

P. L.

I am very grateful to the other editors of *The New Republic* for permission to reprint these articles.

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Hop In, Noble

Shriners. Beaming Babbitts each with a red fez upon his head, embroidered with Masonic gold, with a star, scimitar and crescent, all of gold, with the name of his local temple, with Wa-Wa, Osman, Mt. Sinai and Aleppo, meaning Regina, Sask., St. Paul, Minn., Montpelier, Vt., and Boston, Mass.

The Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. Founded among Masons in 1872 by Dr. Walter M. Fleming, who caught the glamor incurably while attending a meeting of Bokhara Shrine in Marseilles, Fr., when Yusuf Churi Bey was its Illustrious Potentate.

"The Mystic Shrine"—the *National Fraternal Weekly* is telling the world about Dr. Fleming—"was first started in New York City as a social club proposition." You said it, Weekly.

A social club proposition. 600,000 members. 600,000 fezes. 600,000 Nobles. An Imperial Council every year. Last year, at San Francisco, bank clearings during Shrine Week jumped up $27,000,000. Thoughtful estimators estimated that Washington would be richer by $70 per capita as a result of its hospitality. Pop. of Washington: 400,000. A sure enough social club proposition.

For a year Washington has been getting ready. For nearly a year the receiving committee of Almas Temple has been in the telephone book. For a year the glow of the distant, approaching Fez has lighted the faces of the realtors, merchants, business men and storekeepers of Washington. Fraternalists bring their own dollars with them.

And here it is now only three days before the big parade. Everything is ready. Thousands of beeves which might otherwise have lived are now only sirloin or tenderloin. The arms turning ice cream freezers could, if only they were one arm, stop up the hole in Vesuvius. Dozens of railroad experts are switching trainloads of Shriners about the map. The British steam yacht *Istar* has landed a quarter of a million dollars' worth of whiskey off the Virginia coast. The framing and lithograph stores have brought up from the cellar all the pictures with pyramids, deserts, sphinxes, or anything oriental and put them in the front window. A sightseeing bus company from New York is being enjoined from operating by the native bus companies. The telephone company has installed a new exchange, and all you have to say is, "Noble, give me Shrine, please." Comfort stations are springing up like mushrooms. Full page ads by clothing houses shout, "Hail, hail, Nobles of Shrinedom." The police have promised to take the

extra arm out of the middle of the park-benches. It's cooler sleeping outdoors.

Small corner lunch-counters with a large business have protected their plate-glass with new pine fences. A sign on the street cars reads "Shriners—Glad-handed—Glen Echo—Amusement Park." A deluge of banners, souvenirs, trinkets, song-books, pennants, fezes, miniature replicas of Nobles. Everywhere a poster shouts out the Welcome of Almas Temple. Sign in a window: "Nobles—Raise—Hell." Everywhere the golden star, scimitar and crescent. In a tailor's window a beautifully clothed Noble, pink china face, red fez, stands, while his pink china wife, with a white fez, sits.

Three hundred thousand are coming, some with their wives. Mostly without, for it's a social club proposition. The city's population will be doubled. Forty high-priced special detectives are coming from out of town. Signs everywhere: "Help make Washington safe for the Shriners." Special police regulations. Amplifiers at street corners will broadcast speeches, but will also blare out from time to time: "Beware of pickpockets." A strong anti-Shrine current is running, but not in print. Prominent lawyers are going to New Hampshire for the duration of Shrine Week. Newspaper men, though writing columns of "color" every day, are

forming secret and violent organizations for sabotage.

The automobile committee of Almas Temple provides thousands of little sheets of paper. They are easily glued to the windshield of a car. They read: "Hop In, Noble." Almost every car has one. Some people have a good time sticking them on cars known to belong to Catholics. There was a race-riot close by the White House when a Negro named Charlie Noble took one of them literally. A member of the Sabotage Club cut out the "in" and enjoys steering straight for every Shriner he sees. "Hop, Noble!" Somebody else pasted one in the windshield of a hearse.

Every other store front displays a two-foot-square portrait of Noble Warren G. Harding, wearing a foolish smile and a fez marked Aladdin.

Monday. Squads of four or five Shriners roaming about. Horn-rimmed glasses. It is hard to believe that any of them ever looked hungry. Yet some of them must have had small beginnings. From Nobody to Noble. The Face across the Counter becomes the Face behind the Desk. Puffy, sedentary, prosperous, good-natured faces. Men about Main Street. Boomers, Boosters, but not an uplifter face among them. A dream bites into some people's faces like small-pox; with others, like measles, it passes traceless away.

In the center of the town, swarming fezes. Thousands arrive by every train. The insurance man from El Zaribah (Phoenix, Ariz.) is chewing gum and reading the Last-Minute Instructions. "Dear Noble Aid," they say, "see that you have in your equipment the Arm Band, the Map of Parade formation, the Official Program, the Guide Book of Washington. . . ." The Noble from Boumi (Baltimore) is glad-handing with other Boumis, while his wife hangs nervously on the edge. So few women came.

The Illustrious Potentate is driving around in a yellow, red and green Buick. The Imperial Potentate has a milk-white Cadillac. Potentate: pronounce Pot to rhyme with rot, not rote.

Crowds move, swirl, bulge, trickle, form ponds, fez-sprinkled puddles along F street. In the window where are sold sectional bookcases stands a life-size camel, stuffed. A special court has been instituted for misdemeaning or felonious Nobles. The Shrine Court.

One of the Papers prints a Fez Column daily. One of the thirteen special cars of Bagdad Temple, Butte, Montana, holds an exhibit of the state's mineral, agricultural and industrial wealth. Irem Temple, from Wilkes-Barre, is giving away rings of anthracite set in a gold band. Washington realtors are begging fellow-nobles to locate nere.

Mirza, Gizeh, Karnak, Aad; Zembo, Kazim, Ballut Abyad.

The Transcontinental caravan rolls into town. Thirty, sixty, dirty automobiles, written all over with chalk, stacked high with tents, duffle bags. All the way from Frisco. A little automobile snowball, picking up cars in Reno, in Denver, in Kansas City. Not all have arrived. Somewhere on the great plains leans in the ditch a pathetic Ford, to mark with its whitening bones the rebound of the pioneer.

On Pennsylvania Avenue a sign says "Space reserved for cushion concession."

Jerusalem, New Orleans, La.; Lulu, Philadelphia, Pa.

Down a lost street this hot Monday, twenty-nine government employees are busy printing a Department of Agriculture pamphlet on the care of bees. Bees, out of sight of man, buzzing and brushing against the petals of violet and vermilion and white and silent flowers.

Noble Harding is dedicating the Zero Milestone Monument. With amplifiers. It is hideously hot. Those who escape are recaptured, half a mile away, by amplifiers suddenly shouting at them something about "the highways being the arteries of the Nation."

The amplifiers are in the Garden of Allah. The

Garden of Allah is the main reviewing stand in front of the Treasury. It is marked by four monstrous Egyptian pillars, figured with Isises and Osirises and all the hieroglyphic progeny of Tut. The Sphinx isn't here. He couldn't talk.

Some women are sitting in the empty grandstand, fanning themselves, slowly.

Tuesday. The sickened leaves wilt on the trees. It is early, the light still slants, but people have begun to perspire. In far quarters of the city the air is troubled, shattered with blare of assembling bands. All day long, not a stroke of work will be done in the whole of Washington. Its inhabitants, the old, the youngest, Negroes, soldiers, admirals, retired shoe salesmen, are streaming down to watch the parade. For hours under a molten sky the wire ropes dyke a restless, sweating humanity against the naked blistering avenue. The parade is late. Little Negro boys and pale stenographers are sitting with newspapers between them and the curb. Hours, hours, and heat, heat, heat. A few official or Shrine cars whiz down the empty avenue. Almas fezes walk up and down on errands of efficiency. People are still buying views from windows.

Suddenly necks crane. Miles away, under the Capitol, faint brass music, a thin line which with infinite slowness becomes visible as the parade.

The little Negro boy tears his newspaper and gives half of it for the stenographer to sit upon. That figure on horseback a hundred yards away is a policeman. Fifty yards. He is Sullivan, the chief of police. Now he is abreast of us. He is a Roman Catholic. Leading a parade of Masons. Lamb and Lion.

For three hours, with wide spacing and one hundred and ten bands, the Temples march by. Sweating credit men, cashiers, and grainbrokers dressed as Arab sheiks, as Beys, Pashas, with turbans, fezes, turned-up shoes, oriental rompers, Eastern bloomers, embroidered jackets; carrying fifes, tom-toms, banners, bugles, swords, Arabian rifles, bass drums; riding milk-white Arabian steeds, driving camels, giving orders, leading bands, playing Dixie, singing "Iowa, Iowa," marching, counter marching, revolving on the asphalt in elaborate evolutions practiced indoors for months, shuffling, goose-stepping, double-quicking, marking time, losing step, looking glum, looking tired, looking strained, rarely looking gay. Potentates steering Roman chariots, divans in Ottoman robes, scimitars, slippers, perspiration, historic accuracy, hideous raw colors, Paris greens, elevated oranges, fire-wagon reds, bottle-pop pinks, frogs, braids, chains, buttons, gilt, trimmings, Zem Zem, Lu Lu, Sudan, Sesostris, Za-Ga-Zig.

All the paraders look as if they came from the same town.

Heroic pain on the faces of three hundred pound insurance men marching three hours—ten tons of human weight lost on this parade—Negroes gaping open-mouthed. They have been told they like to dress up too much—"A childish passion for mummeries" is not good in a Negro—Here comes Lu Lu Temple, Philadelphia. Have you ever seen it? A sort of synagogue done in Coney Island style—The crowd cheers "Dixie" madly. A crowd of 500,000. The whole town is out.

Somewhere along R Street now, miles from here, the sick child left alone is crying, crying; the spare auto tire bursts from the heat with none to hear it; the couple in the frame house went down-town early and their milk is souring on the stoop.

Is it a dream? The world rubs its eyes. Can this be? This oriental pageant of 20,000 Christian American business men? Can such people exist? I quote from Mr. Santayana's remarks on Dickens: "But the world is wrong. There are such people."

The parade is over. Slowly the human dams burst, and fezes and ordinary people trickle away to lunch, to the ball-game, to see the sights in the "Approved Shrine Bus." To the sweltering day more heat is added in dry blasts through sidewalk gratings from hotel kitchens. The invasion of

public buildings begins. Two wives of Nobles are talking of home affairs in the White House crystal room. Not a yard away is the gilded piano, the only thing on the empty ball-room floor except the large feet of Nobles. Some fezes are on, some off, as they peer at the ex-presidential china. Criss-cross of sightseers. Home talk between sights. "I wrapped them up in some tissue paper." The Smithsonian. Wife of fez is saying: "You can see all the costumes of all the Presidents' wives." A line at the drinking fountain in the Indian division. The Freer Museum. Exit Fez: "Well, we did that in seven seconds." The collarless Noble from Concord, N. H., is looking at the Whistlers, and talking loudly about something else. The collarless Bektash in early youth swallowed a megaphone.

Groups swirl, wander, criss-cross, stop and gaze. Headlines: "380 prostrated by heat." Down by the Union Station the cowboys are holding their Rodeo, bulldogging steers, riding the bucking bronchs. Realtors faint, but cowboys break their arms and legs. Two Americas.

A kind storm threatens, mutters, spills a little rain, breaks up into a shredded sky of blue and black and miraculous opal towers of cloud.

The blue broadens, and with twilight the heat settles deeper upon the town. It will be hot to-

night for the Nobles sleeping in the 180 Pullman cars over in Alexandria. Motion has stopped. Crowds revolve upon their center. Dinner roars out through the open windows of every hotel in town. Other Nobles prefer to consume "Fullmeal" or "Moonshine: full o' pep" standing up out-doors where the sidewalk is man-high with cases of near-beer and the Chanters from Mizpah are rendering "Yes, we have no bananas, we have no bananas to-day."

The dark settles further down, and the heat with it. Greetings, horns, songs, bands in the distance. A voice: "Oh, George, there's a nice girl!" The shoe-shine men are sore because so many Nobles wear white shoes.

Nine o'clock. Rattles, horns, distant bands. Endless slow procession of automobiles. Nobles in evening dress are sitting talking on running-boards of parked cars. White shirts in the black air. Cries of "Ice cold drink!" Alhambra asks Kalurah to have a real drink with him. (Wild Stories. A case for every room. Two Pullmans fitted up as bars. Reservoir valises with a spigot.) Horns, bells, rattles. Crowds walking noisily up and down Pennsylvania Avenue. Automobile loads of ten, fifteen. "Ice cold drink here!" Midnight. The stands are still full of crowds watching the other crowds walking by under the illuminations

which roof the Avenue like the skeleton of a giant saffron fish. Girls are being picked up, and break away again, screaming. Peaceful Nobles have gone to bed. Noisy, good-natured, Coney Island, Broadway, College reunion and ten cent dance-hall are still awake.

Looming through great trees, the Capitol dome glows frostily, the mysterious icing of a ghostly wedding cake. Shadowed from this planet-radiance, thousands sprawl and saunter in the heat.

What's it all about? I read in Some Things an Entered Apprentice (for Masonry) Ought to Know: "It began with the yearning of the human heart for something beyond the ken of man's moral vision in a search for the unattainable. . . ." And it's ending with (so far as I am concerned):

"Hop, Noble!"

Pigskin Preferred

Harvard Athletic Authorities have installed a dozen electric lights so that the football team may carry on practice work at any hour. . . . Now Harvard will have no excuse for losing because of lack of twenty-four-hour facilities.—*Daily News.*

Education, as the above item (which is not of our invention) will testify, is advancing by leaps and bounds. This is one of the biggest bounds ever made. In fact, while our day remains only twenty-four hours long, no further bound in this direction is possible.

This courageous innovation ought not to be surprising. For Harvard is one of the most progressive universities in the country. And not alone in athletics. In scholarship also she—"she," for like excursion boats, colleges are feminine—she has distinguished herself by recognition of the long neglected subject of business. As compared with Latin, Greek, the Renaissance and plane (not solid) ornithology, the study of business is a tender plant, and must be watered if it is not to perish in all but a few enthusiastic garrets. The President, and good fellows, and overseers and superintendents and foremen of Harvard were wise to see this ob-

scure condition clearly, and courageous to remedy it. In action, their courage exceeded their wisdom, and they have constructed a mechanism so vast, and a financial reservoir of proportions so oceanic, that the tender plant is in more danger of being drowned than not watered. However, let us not be pessimistic. Some if not all business will sprout sturdily in spite of this golden cloudburst, and there seems small doubt that among the lost arts revived will be those of giving short change, punching time-clocks, dressing windows, reading ticker-tape and compiling sucker-lists.

Football, like business, is seldom pursued for its own sake. As a prominent half-back once said: "I don't run back punts for my health." It is not for amusement that the Harvard squad charges and blocks and tackles all afternoon, and it is not for sheer love of sport that they are now getting ready to grind through signal practice by artificial light. In fact, all this practicing is mighty hard work, ever so much harder work than brain work. There is a malicious popular belief that football players are not naturally inclined toward brain work. This is unfair: football players have merely chosen the sterner course. Many more fail at this course than at brain courses. Only a few men each year, out of dozens of candidates, win their letter. It is much more difficult to earn an H than an A. B. All

honor, then, to those who aim at one letter rather than two. An A. B. can be obtained nowadays without burning the midnight oil. But an H requires hours and hours of midnight electricity. Never, in the history of all education, has there been so arduous a night school.

It is quite proper that football should be taken seriously. In the past it was often considered a sport, and it was played for fun in a slapdash, unprofessional manner by young men who enjoyed the exercise. This race of dilettantes is now extinct, and has given place to a more conscientious generation which realizes the true function of football in any well-conducted alma mater. For alma mater flourishes by victory on the gridiron, and droops after defeat. No alma mater can withstand prolonged unsuccess at football. The reverberations of humiliation in the Stadium or the Bowl are far-reaching. Attendance in classes on Egyptology, Cryptology and the Italian drama drops off. Scholarship standards quiver and collapse. Bright young men in middle western high schools hear from afar the dismal thunder of defeat and elect to go elsewhere. Graduates and alumni (they are not identical) storm and sulk in the suburbs, write angry letters, tear up checks and send their sons to the University of Nebraska. The loss of these checks is more serious than the loss of the sons.

There are always plenty of sons, but checks are more ephemeral, and subject to seasonal influences. The autumn season, with its toll of games lost or won, profoundly affects the writing of checks. And checks build universities, while young men merely inhabit them.

A graduate is one who is proud of his alma mater. An alumnus is one who is ashamed of her when she begins to lose football games. An alumnus writes more checks than a graduate, and is in every way the sterner man. He makes certain demands, and he stands by to see that the goods are delivered. He is a realist. He knows the value of professors and instructors, and rightly assigns to them a very minor role in the educational process. He sees to it that these learned cogs are paid strictly according to their services. He reserves his real enthusiasm for the football coach, and makes sure that the salary for that position will attract the kind of man who can win games and keep his desk clear.

But the alumnus, for all his hardheadedness, has yet to go the whole hog. He is still dealing in half measures. The desperate resolve of the football authorities at Harvard to perfect their team by putting electric lights on the field ought to spur the alumnus to equally rigorous action. His path is clear: football must be rescued from the paralyzing limbo between amateurishness and professionalism

Much as he might sigh for the old days, it is obviously too late to regain for the game a lost amateur standing. The present status is impossible. Onward, then, to a business basis. The players must of course remain amateurs, but the game should be professionalized. This happy device would at once save honor and avoid paying salaries to the players. A stock company should obviously be floated, with the alumni subscribing for the shares. Only a few graduates would be allowed to participate, as their loyalty to the team is somewhat open to question. But since graduates are almost universally poorer men than alumni, perhaps it would not be necessary to make this humiliating discrimination against them.

The details of such a scheme we leave to men plainly more qualified than ourselves. We confess, with no little hesitation and some fear, that our own mentality is more of the graduate type than the alumnus. This means, for one thing, that we cherish the pale remains of some anxiety about educational matters in the old sense. And we should therefore like to be allowed to put in a timid plea that some of the profits of Stadium Common, or Bowl Bonds, or Pigskin Preferred, which under the reign of a competent coach would be considerable, be paid in to the University for strictly educational purposes. We do not go so far as to suggest that

a professor's salary be raised, out of these profits, to a figure so near that of the football coach as to give grounds for any serious jealousy or competition. It would be safer to avoid this issue by endowing, with the Pigskin dividends, a few erudite courses in allied subjects, such as Greek games 2a, or Discus 13, or Checkers among the Early Christians, which would, by partaking at once of the nature of sport and learning, endanger neither. These courses, it goes without saying, could only be given in the years following football victories. Defeat, particularly over a period of years, would diminish profits, or even wipe them out, and if the alumni stockholders in Pigskin Preferred passed a dividend or two, Discus 13 could no longer be thrown.

After this sensible reorganization, of course the electric lights on the practice field would burn forever. In this era of competition, no Harvard football team, once having inaugurated them, could give them up. In fact, these artificial lights would be rapidly copied by rival colleges, and would in a few years be looked back upon as only the first step in a sort of football armament race. The plain electric light bulbs would give way to infra-red rays, which are known to induce that super-normal adrenal activity which marks the difference between a mediocre line-plunger and an All-American full-

back. Music is a notorious aid to drop-kicking, and for many years the psychological laboratories could compete in discovering just which tunes produced most field goals. Gradually the exactions of the larger Football would stimulate every science, every research department, would draw a little useful contribution from every course taught in the University. Football law, football hygiene, the drama of football, football ballistics, football histology, the æsthetics of football—there is no area of human knowledge in which the football could not make at least a first down.

But let every bit of research, every signing of contract with coaches, every advanced secret practice, every cutting of the Pigskin melon, be performed by electric light. Too much daylight isn't good for the game—or business—of football.

It Isn't the Heat

The sporting page of the *Evening Journal,* aided by a hot puff of wind, slid from the face of Mr. Sol Weissman, sixty-two, poultry merchant of 514 East 113th Street, who was asleep in the park; slid slowly away from him onto the green grass, which was not exactly grass, and not exactly green. It drifted at first gently, without noise, then viciously, with a tired rustle; then, vaulting, in the most casual swoop, a low iron railing, it doubled up, collapsed, died and was buried in a very small pool of ginger ale.

The face of heaven in the west was vaguely scarred with darkness. Dirty purple chasms opened, twisted, closed, hinting at disappointed lightning. Overhead a mad fringe of cloud shot out distorted fingers against a clearer sky. In as many parts of the city, thirty-one taxi men were changing tires, nameless black tools scattered around them, and nameless heads watching them, moving on, passing by, halting, and moving away again.

A tree whispered in the wind—or rather, an object of wood, partly furnished with leaves, planted at a cost of sixty-five dollars, and doomed soon to

be cut down because of the carbon-monoxide from the automobiles, stirred angrily at the passage of some invisible breath. This giant breath, which was partly air and partly dust, filled all streets, the little streets where people sit on the stoops, and the bigger streets protected by the elevated, and the great big streets where nobody walks bareheaded; it filled them, settled into them, only wobbling at the corners, only lifting the dust in front of United Cigar Stores.

And with pathetic fortitude men everywhere are fighting this breath, this hot, thin dirty soup, their unseen enemy. Thirty, forty, a hundred and forty thousand electric fans smash it to pieces, drive it to the other side of the room, break its wave up into trickles, push it back again upon itself. A million sweating, lonely human ships, keeled with O'Sullivan's, full rigged in dirty Palm Beach suits, push like prows their noses through it, swallow it, breathe it in, breathe it out again with tobacco smoke. A million walls separate it into channels, rectangular sinks, Panama canals of heat; it is enclosed in all kinds of cubes, boxes, shafts, melons, keyholes of space; it fills subways and hospitals and untuned pianos and empty milk bottles.

Life goes on, thrashing its way through the heat; life, and death, and bigger and better business, and popcorn-making and conferences and hat-blocking

and stamp-collecting and embezzlement and hiring and firing and getting the wrong number. The fly which foolishly tried to escape is dead, and the same thing might have happened yesterday. And yesterday was fairly cool. Collarless battalions continue to count the cost, which they have been known to do before. Little Tony, who was sent out to the delicatessen store with a fistful of pennies, has lost one of them. Lots more where that went to.—Joe, did Scheerer ever answer that letter?—I want a filet mignon and I want it quick.—Take off your coat, man, you're crazy.—Was there anything else you cared to look at?—The Lily cups are all gone.—How do I get to Brooklyn, please?—Eight prostrated in the Middle West.—I could stand another beer like that last one.—Is the pool still open?—Well, young man, we'll start you in at fifteen dollars a week.—What does the paper say for tomorrow?

About three miles away a grayish horse has fallen down on the car tracks.—They hadn't ought to load them up like that. It takes two policemen to say he'll have to be shot. Those crates are pretty heavy on a day like this. Ten—eighteen—twenty-five people standing around.—I had a gray horse like that once up in Jersey.—Is it cooler out there? Some of these people who stand rubbering around are going to be late. And one of them will never

get home at all—but that's another story. The street cars are blocked six streets north and south.

On the thirty-first floor there is a sliver of a breeze. Some carbon copies have blown all over the floor. A copy of the agreement with the National Baseboard Company has drifted out of the window, and the file clerk in his shirt-sleeves is too late to catch it. So he watches it spin and saunter down the air past the twenty-eighth floor, past the twenty-sixth, where it flaps impersonally and veers eastward, down, down, sideways down, a pale defeated speck now, twisting like a fish into the dark mouth of streets. From the thirty-first floor one sees, between windowed towers, a brass trail and a leaden road—rivers, both of them. And beyond, the west complicates itself sullenly, piles up to hide a faceless sun, thickens, darkens, disintegrates into hurrying blotches, promises thunder, and retracts.

While from the city flies up its own trivial thunder, its crackle and aimless bang, bang of metal upon metal, its thump of rubber, rubber upon pavement, its trivial cries from nowhere, everywhere. And the air like syrup catches all these sounds and keeps them.

Mr. Flaherty climbs the stairs to the elevated, but not solely because he weighs two hundred and eighty-five pounds. When he has climbed seven steps he climbs down again to buy the *Mirror*.

When he has bought the *Mirror* he starts up again. When he gets to the top he will weigh a little less than he did at the bottom, but don't tell him—he'll never believe you. When he has reached the top he has to change a quarter while a train grinds down, stops and goes on without him. Those three-car trains are always full. While he is waiting for the next three-car train, which will be just as full, Mr. Flaherty finds that the chocolate in the slot machine sticks to the wrapping and to his fingers and to the *Mirror* and to the change for his quarter. When the train has come, and the people who want to get out have crushed out, and the people who want to get in have jammed in, and when Mr. Flaherty has found a vacant strap, mopped his face and unbuttoned his waistcoat and opened, with his double chin and his free hand, the *Mirror* with damp chocolate on it, people around him wonder whether he weighs as much as three hundred pounds and whether tomorrow will be cooler.

—This is room 1134. Yes, room and bath, number 1134. Send up a boy. Is it hot down there in the lobby? Will you please have an iceberg brought up to my room by a boy? A real big iceberg, a stem-winder, the kind that a fellow like me who is from Cincinnati would appreciate. That's right. I want an iceberg to hold in my lap and sit on my knee and drip down the back of my neck. Hello,

Operator, is this the Grand Central Iceberg hotel? Have you got a room and iceberg? I want ice water and an ice-towel and an iced Gideon's Bible and an ice room-key and an ice room-clerk and an ice spittoon and an iceberg. . . .

In Schabel's laundry, the shirts won't dry. Mr. Schabel and the negro ironer are in B. V. D.'s from the waist up. Anyway, this is better than wet-wash. —Does these collars belong to WYO or W40?— WYO's a big feller. I think he wears sixteens. Now that W40, he's a little gentleman. No such size like that. . . . Mr. Schabel climbs up to the top rack for a package. Up near the ceiling where all the spare heat and wet collect. Mr. Schabel nearly faints. Tailoring was better. There goes an ambulance. It's getting dark every minute. Perhaps this will clear the air.—George, you otto seen the storm we had once in Syracuse.

Darkness hangs and then moves away. The west rumbles.—Is that an express, Molly?—No, it's more likely thunder.—Then it will be an improvement tomorrow, maybe. . . . A few big drops spatter down, spatter and break, leaving dark spots the size of dimes which are soon dry and disappear. The storm moves north, up the river, out of town, away for the week-end, off to the mountains, on vacation with the wife and kiddies, where a feller can breathe. Lucky storm! Some folks have all

the luck—I never could pull down any of the big dough myself.

And Mr. Sol Weissman, sixty-two, poultry merchant of 514 East 113th Street, wakes up and clutches for the *Evening Journal,* which no longer covers him. And he goes home with his hat now in one hand, now in the other, down a long hot street at the end of which flashes, for a few seconds, the passing of a bright boat, a white vision, stacks aslant, a little white movie of hope framed by the houses at the end of the street.

The boat goes north, the storm goes north, but the heat stays behind, and so does Mr. Weissman, and so does that very small piece of faded and dejected lettuce which he is just about to step on. If he looks up, and not down at the lettuce, he will see a cloud, thirty-one floors high—no, higher than that—higher than any earthly tower, purer than any earthly prayer for rain, shining, shining, and moving north.

It isn't the heat, it's the city.

Keep Your Desk Clear

This is the Twenty-second Annual National Business Show, "America's Efficiency Exposition." I am sorry I missed the other twenty-one. In case the meaning of the word "efficiency" is not entirely clear to you, I shall tell a little story before we go inside the Sixty-ninth Regiment Armory. Once upon a time the President of our Corporation received a letter from a printing establishment in Pennsylvania. It was a perfectly adequate letter under the circumstances (which I have forgotten). It said that the printing establishment was, or was not, prepared to do so-and-so. But it was distinct from the average run of business letters in that there was no Dear Sir or Gentlemen or Dear Sir and Brother at the beginning, and no Yours Truly or We Remain or Awaiting Your Further Orders or Truly Yours at the end of it. Instead there was a single line of very fine type printed in red at the bottom of the page. As follows: CUSTOMARY SALUTATION OMITTED IN THE INTEREST OF EFFICIENCY.

To have repeated Dear Sir at the beginning of every letter and Yours Truly at the end of it would have cost that Pennsylvania printing concern four words per letter, four hundred words per hundred

letters, two thousand words per day, 600,000 words per year, 10,000 minutes of one stenographer's time, or her salary for two months, or $166.66. If we multiply this by the number of years the Business Show has been going, plus interest, plus depreciation, minus interest on depreciation, it comes to a whole lot of money. Now do you understand? Yes? Then let's go inside.

Under the vast vault of the armory over two hundred and fifty exhibitors have concentrated the last word in the greatest of all American wars. Here is every device, mechanical or psychological, miraculous, ingenious, unnecessary or ridiculous, that can possibly shave off a little more time, space, waste or effort. Here is everything from the thousand-dollar calculating machine which will solve every conceivable arithmetical problem, down to the fifty-cent cigarette holder shaped like a snake (named "Cleo" after the well-known asp) and coiled so that the index finger inserted in the coil will keep the cigarette at a distance just sufficient to prevent the smoke from coming between the poker player's eyes and his four aces, which the smoke, were it not for the index and the coil and the snake, would blur until they seemed to be only three aces. . . .

Never were so many rare and beautiful Americana gathered under one roof. They are rare, be-

cause most people never see them unless they are employed by some huge company with a million outgoing letters a day. They are beautiful, with that smooth, mysterious simplicity of polished metal which no merely ornamental, no ordinarily useful, object can ever achieve. These adding machines and tabulators and duplicators and fanfold form feeders and dictaphones and filing systems are the mirror of our America, and the best and handsomest and neatest of them deserve to be preserved in the wing of some museum, as exemplary of their age, no less than the andirons of 1776. The reflection of this America they give us is double. On one side, miraculous ingenuity, a compact, softly clicking machine which will perform mental feats impossible to the majority of human minds, machines which are themselves the cumulative product of sheer genius. On the other side, mere material substitutes for mind, crutches for memory, ticklers, calendars, reminders, classifiers which hint darkly that mind, in the high places of business, knowing itself about to soften and give way, is casting about for a mechanical successor. One kind of machine embodies the triumph of mind over matter; the other, exactly the reverse. One kind proves that some of the most ingenious and intelligent men in the world are right here in the next block; another kind insists that no human being ought to be al-

lowed to perform any mental process that a machine will do as well. We have lost our belief in the horse-sense of mankind, and instead we want everything to be fool-proof, probably because we have begun to realize the real percentage of fools in the population. Certainly this exhibition is astonishingly rich in clever devices to prevent people from doing the simplest acts, whether they be the opening of an envelope or the remembering of a date for lunch. We now use more brains avoiding thought than we ever did thinking.

The floor is divided into aisles, where the big guns of business are demonstrated, the adding machines, typewriters, cash registers and filing systems. Perched around the gallery are the smaller fry—cuptors, check-protectors, and self-closing inkstands. One of the exhibits we most looked forward to is, alas, missing, but the trade journal, Office Appliances, gives us hope of meeting it again: "We will exhibit a new line of cuspidors at Booth 50, Grand Rapids Convention . . . brass, statuary bronze, olive green, mahogany and white enamel." But here, if you like white enamel, is something even better. On a raised stand is a lily-white desk, crowned by a snow-white typewriter. It revolves slowly, inexorably. No one is sitting at it. We take it to be an invention whereby the Chief Executive (or the Big Boy, as he is some-

times called) can survey all points of the office compass without using the muscles of his neck. Next door is a glorious fanfold form feeder, which supplies an endless stream of forms, anywhere up to eight, automatically sandwiched with carbon at the typewriter. Where seven separate operations were once necessary, only one is now. One girl only is needed where three were required before. What has happened to the other two girls? we ask the salesman, but he is not interested—"Do you use much carbon?" from a persuasive voice, and we are shown a complicated and expensive machine to test the relative merits of little strips of carbon paper—Here the Puro-filter cries out, "Have a drink with us"; there they are selling Dr. Eliot's Five-Foot Shelf.—We pass a book of binders for all purposes, and the purpose that first meets the eye in large lettering is Hookworm Case Record.—Now comes a package-sealing machine, which we would really like to buy. Evidently the makers are proud of it, for at the back of the booth, in a gold frame, against a purple plush background lit by invisible bulbs like a miniature stage set, is the Sealer, looking like one of the Golden Idols which Israel was told not to worship. This arrangement is popular, and farther on we see an even more elaborate use of it. The Interior Telephone is a small, neat box with plugs and switches, to be used in inter-office com-

munication. Its function is demonstrated by a huge board with five round holes. Each hole, again like a stage set, is beautifully illuminated, and features, upon the corner of a desk, an Interior Telephone. The Telephone in the middle is labeled President, and clustered about him are smaller telephones marked Vice-President, Treasurer, Sales and Traffic department. Each telephone connects with all the others, but no man is visible. Perhaps none is necessary.

In the good old days when men were men and not Vice-Presidents, the head of a business wanted few things. A desk, a couple of pencils, a telephone, an old cardboard letter file, a red-haired typist, and a handful of cigars. But times have changed.

The units of American business, the typewriter, the 'phone, the desk and the index card have subdivided and multiplied and evolved into an organism as horribly complicated as man. So that now, if you want your office to be 100 percent efficient, you need hundreds of dollars' worth of expensive toys and delicate tools. Suppose that you are setting up a moderate-sized factory, with records to keep, letters to receive and answer.

A hair-trigger, fool-proof, electric time-stamping clock to record the exact hour of the mail's arrival (this could be learned from the postman, but he is bound to be a few minutes out). For opening the

mail, a lightning electric letter-opener, slicing the fraction of an inch off each envelope at the rate of two hundred a minute. This will bring a large mail to the dictators about twenty minutes earlier than usual. Unfortunately there is no machine for reading mail. Next year, perhaps. In the meanwhile, the mail is in the hands of the Dictators. They dictate answers into a nickel-plated dictaphone. The stenographer, seated in an Adco Posture Chair (The Do More Health Chair), gets the voice from a wax roll by the aid of a transcribing machine. The wax rolls need a shaving machine, unfortunately not also adapted to human use. The typist uses a noiseless typewriter, which itself is enclosed in a sound-proof cabinet, something like the casket of a very minute and valuable corpse, with a glass lid. If, as sometimes happens, she writes from a notebook, or copies from other type, she needs an Error-No Copy stand, which avoids craning of, and pains in, her neck. If she is sending out a lot of envelopes, she must have a Speed-o-Feeder, with electric motor, which whips envelopes in and out of her typewriter at the rate of three thousand a day. She ought not to be without the Carlton paper jogger, to keep the edges of sheets of paper together. From time to time she steps to the Purofilter for just another little drink. If she is merely filling out orders, here comes the fanfold form

feeder, with its seven carbons and eight copies, for yourself, the bookkeeper, shipping order, packing slip, statistical, posting medium, express, and follow up. Into the jungle of such beautiful, mysterious beasts as the calculators and adding machines we will not penetrate. But a quantity check writer is indispensable. So is a mimeograph machine, or a multigraph, or a personal letter-writing machine, or at least a one-motion simplicator-duplicator. And of course a Kalamazoo loose-leaf binder. As for index-card and filing systems, we will give no advice. There is every kind imaginable to choose from, and they are all the best. The cards can be arranged either to flap, like wings, or to jump up one by one at the push of a plunger, or to get lost in mere alphabetical order. On the whole, a machine that lost a certain number of cards per hour would in the end save time and trouble.

All of the above would come to nearer three than two thousand dollars. Expensive? Yes, but efficient. And the expense ought not to stop here. Consider your telephone. Its naked outlines are appalling. So much can be done with it. You can attach it to or swing it away from your desk in a dozen attractive ways. You can muzzle it at least twice, you can put a stethoscope in your ear, you can soften the impact of the cold rubber receiver against your ear with an Enjoyophone, you can

check up on the telephone company with a Talliphone, you can buy automatic bookholders and note-takers, you can even buy a Weilaphone, which "directs the sounds you want to hear into both ears at once just as nature intended." Now add up.

Talliphone	$ 7.50
Hush-a-phone	10.00
Double-Desk Equipoise extension bracket	8.50
Book-holder and note-jotter	7.00
Hold-no-phone	.50
Weilaphone	5.00
Enjoyophone	.50
	$39.00

Now let me suggest a few things for your desk. Your desk is the most important part of your business. It is the brain cell, whether you are there or not. If your desk is inefficient, you might as well be out at the ball park, but a well-appointed desk works all by itself, even if you are at the ball park. Papers lie on it, and are taken away. Papers repose in the proper corner, wire basket, or cubby-hole, and are taken away, or left, or removed to another wire basket. All this is work. The whole purpose of your work is to keep your desk clear. For this I cannot too highly recommend the Kleradesk. The Kleradesk is a system of sectionalized upright metal compartments, in three finishes to

imitate wood. The salesman showed me a photograph of an ordinary desk, littered with papers, letters, telegrams, powers of attorney, blank checks, negotiable bonds, unsigned contracts, unread reports, and what not. Then he showed me a happier picture. The desk was clear and all the papers were in their proper compartments. The work was well done. The unanswered letters were in the compartment marked Unanswered, the bonds were marked Bonds, etc. There was nobody sitting at either desk, but the difference in efficiency was obviously enormous. That Kleradesk desk is marked for advancement. Some day it will be the President of a great Corporation—always provided it does not neglect to furnish itself with No-over-Flo sponge cups (opal), $1.25, and an Emeraline Double desk set, "something real swell for Executives' offices," $27.

The desk at which I am now sitting is not doing much work. Its owner is away, though that in itself is no reason for its idleness. In his absence the desk, far from clear, shelters a hat, a cigar, five stacks of miscellaneous papers and one pen, of the variety made popular by post-offices. In one drawer of the desk I find old letters (which should be on file) and pipe-cleaners (which ought to be listed under both P and C). In another drawer is a bulletin of the New York Section of the Green

Mountain Club, a single sheet of note-paper and some very valuable dust. In the bottom drawer is a trunk-strap and a bottle of champagne.

But then the owner of the desk has no reason to equip and educate his desk, or take it into partnership as would a Big Executive. For the owner of this desk is only a brain-worker.

Let There Be Ivy

In the course of a thoughtful article in a recent *Spectator,* called Learning from America, Mr. Norman Angell tells a story which, to us at any rate, is new. He quotes from a certain American university publication, as follows:

> There is a tradition in this university that only the faculty are allowed to walk on the gravel path across the campus. This tradition goes into effect next Monday.

Mr. Angell smiles at this, and we smile with him, and quite possibly the authors of the tradition were themselves amused. But there is in Mr. Angell's smile something which will not be found in the facial expressions of most of his English readers. We can see those faces, and the thought that we cannot at once reply to what we see written on them, and that if we did reply we should probably be misunderstood, is annoying. Temporarily obeying the eternal impulse to condemn unheard, unseen, we can say that the attitude of Mr. Angell's English readers is supercilious, faintly indignant, and also a little perfunctory. With their first amusement at being told that in this country traditions go into effect like time-tables, is mixed no

small amount of "I told you so," which is one of the most delicious sensations in the world, and one of the most blinding. "Incredible," mutter the English at each new folly of ours; "incredible." But in their heart of hearts they are not surprised; they knew all the time that we were just like that. We were raw, ridiculous, ridden with Ku Klux Klans, a prey to evolution trials; we offered a thousand opportunities for laughter, some of them rather novel, but of course the root of the trouble was that we were a country without tradition, a country without ivy, moral or intellectual. Therefore how unusually delightful and satisfying will appear this nugget from the Middle West, this naïve laying of the cornerstone for a tradition, this proof that most of our faults derive from lack of ivy, including the cardinal fault of believing that we can create our own ivy over-night.

If the little item about the gravel path had come to our notice through other channels, if we had found it, for instance, embedded in the "Americana" of the *Mercury,* we might have felt almost supercilious ourselves. "This tradition goes into effect on Monday"—it has a bumptious sound. But it has other sounds, too, as we think it over, and, observing that Mr. Angell's amusement rapidly passes into something else, and that he is forced to admire these creators of tradition, we find it

easier to escape from our first self-mockery, to turn angrily upon that part of his audience overseas which will only snicker, and finally to defend the ivy manufacturers as gallant pioneers, violently carving their small clearing of culture from a traditionless forest.

The act of the college authorities who dedicated a gravel path for an eternal purpose, beginning Monday, was after all in one of the best of American traditions. Stripped to its simplest and crudest, this tradition amounts to a belief, handed on from pioneer father to Babbitt son, that nothing is impossible, or next-to-nothing. It is an absurd belief, but a valiant and necessary one, and its statistical incorrectness ought not to detract from its spiritual truth. And even to its material truth all America is an astounding witness. Looking at our growth, our vast material beehive, amazingly intricate and ingenious, of stone, metal, machinery, men, organization, only a very rash man, or a very wise one, would deny that "anything is possible in such a country." There is nothing built by man so large that he cannot build a larger one, nothing so smoothly working that he cannot add to its noiseless lubrication, nothing so small that he cannot shrink it still further out of sight. For a long while America was so occupied with her material self that the proud belief was perverted, and the will to do

the unbelievable was sidetracked into mere record-breaking. Lately we have awakened from this drunkenness of power, and are a little ashamed of many of the things we were once proud of because they were held to be impossible.

We are beginning to long for other impossibles. Tradition, atmosphere, the echo of lost footfalls, ivy. We envy Europe keenly, and to assuage our humiliation we invade her yearly and bring back objects on which so many more generations of men have sat, from which so many more generations of women have eaten, than have ever eaten off or sat upon anything of our own. But it is an unsatisfactory method, and the antiques, though we have acquired the greater part of them, are not numerous enough to create an atmosphere. Besides, we now realize that an atmosphere is all the more valuable for being indigenous. One party would have us roll our own atmosphere from Indian tobacco, but we are too wise to be persuaded that the Indian is indigenous. Only we ourselves are indigenous, and the atmosphere must be all our own. We are shockingly poor in objects, in furniture, art, churches, ruins, and the accumulation of enough of them to constitute a really thick native atmosphere is a long job. But customs are another matter. We have newspapers, we know how to use propaganda, we have had recent experience in drives,

and the technique of nation-wide selling campaigns is one of the things we do best. If people's purchasing habits can be changed, their social customs can be changed too—better than that, customs can be made to spring up where none grew before. We can pick out a few choice customs and call them traditions. After September 15 no male who wants to save it for next year dares wear a straw hat. Whether the motive is a sense of duty, or fear, or habit, it can be ennobled by calling it a tradition, and sooner or later people will forget how the custom began, which forgetfulness marks the promotion of a custom into a tradition. And as with trivial traditions, like the wearing of straw hats, so with great traditions like the dedication of a particular gravel path to the footsteps of learned men.

Tradition by act of will. . . . It sounds foolish, yet in many ways it is a splendid and Promethean gesture. Time and the gods reserve fire to themselves, man steals it, and one of his uses of it is the annihilation of time. Time has been cruel to us; we were born late, and are behind in the race measured by ivy on the walls. Is Time against us? Then let us annihilate Time.

Consider the stone wall, now a tradition, once an act of will. Look upon this field, these barren New England ribs, with their shivering young trees, boxed in by walls older than any tree. They do not

belong to man now, but to the earth; they are no longer separate rocks, but eternal ribs. And yet not long ago the placing of each rock was an act of will. These walls seem inevitable now, but "only by effort is the inevitable accomplished." The men who placed the rocks sweated blood for a living, and did not have time to say to themselves, as they might easily have said: "It is the tradition of New England to leave stone walls. We'll begin that wall right away. Lord knows when we'll finish it, but the tradition begins tomorrow. And just to make people know we were thinking of tradition, we'll plant a little ivy here and there."

And there was ivy.

It's a Long Subject

(*Two salesmen are sitting in the smoker.*)

Salesman No. 1. Yes, sir, you got to admit it, it makes no difference how you look at it. At least that's how I look at it.

Salesman No. 2. No, sir, if you ask me, I wouldn't say so. No, sir, I wouldn't exactly say as how I would say so.

S. 1. Well, last week a fellow says to me, it all depends on the point of view. A smart man he was too, one of the biggest retail men in Buffalo. I sort of got his idea, I mean the idea we are talking about.

S. 2. Well, that's about how it strikes me. I was saying the same myself to a cousin of mine only yesterday. He was a smart man too, and it both struck us the same way.

S. 1. Now I was just reading an article along those lines. An article from a magazine. You know those sort of articles. Now it was so right along those same lines that I just read it to my wife. Now my wife's a smart woman. And do you know what she said?

S. 2. No, what did she say?

S. 1. Well, she said, right out like that: If you

ask me, she said, that's another proposition entirely. That's what she said.

S. 2. I wouldn't hardly go as far as all that, if that's what she said. My idea is that you've simply got to take a whole lot of other things into consideration.

S. 1. Right there is just where you make your mistake. I've given the matter a lot of thought, and I can't see it.

S. 2. That's just where I think different.

S. 1. You think different?

S. 2. Yes, sir, I think different from what you just said.

S. 1. Well, you just think it over. In the last analysis it all comes down to the same thing in the end.

S. 2. Analysis is right. You can't get round that any way you look at it.

S. 1. A little while back they were all thinking the opposite.

S. 2. Times have changed. Things aren't the way they used to be, so they say, and I'll stick to it. When you come right down to it, the fact of the matter is too technical.

S. 1. Well, sir, I've got a good notion to disagree with you on that point.

S. 2. Now just a minute please, if you'll pardon me please. I met a man at our last convention who

had made a study of the subject. A smart man too. And do you know what he thought?

S. 1. No, what did he think?

S. 2. Well, he thought that if your opinion isn't like that, or pretty near it, it's bound to be disregarded. What do you say to that?

S. 1. Personally I think there's a good deal to be said for it. The same thing happened to me. Last Friday one of our credit men wrote me and one of the things he wrote was, to my way of thinking, mighty near the real truth. He's a smart man, all right, and his general slant is headed up the right way, if I do say so. Some people are made like that. Well, as I said—Now what did I say?

S. 2. You were saying that your own personal reaction wasn't apt to be unusual in your case.

S. 1. Oh, yes! Well, to return to my original proposition. Now they used to teach me that a discussion pro or con, by and large, depends on the circumstances that may or may not arise.

S. 2. That's pretty much what they taught me. But before we decide that, I'd just like to point out the different viewpoints. Take you, now, you're a smart man, for instance.

S. 1. Yes, take me for instance.

S. 2. Well, take you. Now what does it all come down to? In the long run you got to reason it out along other lines more or less.

S. 1. Right here is where I don't get you; I don't get you at all.

S. 2. All right, all right, if that's the way you feel we'd better talk something else, if that's the way you feel about it.

S. 1. That suits me. Now here's a little proposition that's been puzzling me a good deal lately. The idea of the thing, the general notion, I mean, is about like this. Now it seems if you haven't got the right idea, you can't think straight. Of course if you got that I don't need to explain it any further. I leave it to you.

S. 2. You mean that it all depends on how you look at it when you come right down to it after all. Is that what you mean?

S. 1. Substantially that was what I had in mind to convey.

S. 2. Well, sir, it's a whale of an idea.

S. 1. Yes, but it's a long subject.

S. 2. Yes, sir, it's a long subject. You have me there all right. Now if I was to pass judgment on a matter of common knowledge in just the same way, you wouldn't say the problem was solved, would you?

S. 1. No, not 100 percent.

S. 2. No, personally I wouldn't think so either.

S. 1. One hundred percent always works best in the long run.

S. 2. Now if I was to say the opposite, what would you say to that?

S. 1. Well, just between ourselves, I haven't arrived at any opinion on that topic; no, not conclusively.

S. 2. Well then, let's look at it this way. There's another angle to it here which I can't just figure out. Nine times out of ten it's about true enough to go a long way. The central idea is standard and you can't as a rule just generally fool with that sort of an idea.

S. 1. I never did care to fool with an idea of the sort you had reference to.

S. 2. You said it. Reference to an idea without other ideas is more highly advisable than with. You said it that time.

S. 1. On the other hand, if it strikes you as not right, then it's not right, whether it's all right or not.

S. 2. That's fair enough.

S. 1. That's what I always say.

S. 2. Well, most people never heard it put just like you just said.

S. 1. I'll subscribe to that all along the line.

S. 2. It seems we agree pretty well.

S. 1. My name's Tuttle—Wheeler J. Tuttle.

S. 2. Wheeler's my name—Tuttle J. Wheeler. Glad to know you, Mr. Tuttle. *(They shake hands.)*

MR. TUTTLE. About that other matter. You got to admit it, it makes no difference how you look at it. At least that's how I look at it.

MR. WHEELER. No, sir, if you ask me, I wouldn't say so. No, sir, I wouldn't exactly say as how I would say so.

O Death! Where Is Thy Sting?

In Europe, in some countries, when a man dies, his coffin rides, and his friends walk behind with a bareheaded, disconsolate slow dignity that makes the passerby take his hat off too and pause and acknowledge briefly life's end.

In other countries, and in ours, a black, beetle-like trail of dismal carriages rattles through the streets with half-drawn blinds ill-concealing uncomfortable, gloomy faces; or else a convoy of bulging limousines hurries past elevated pillars, trying to nose out the confectioner's yellow delivery van. And no passerby raises his hat.

But in no other country is the undertaker's trade raised to an art, with morticians, and funeral parlors, and mortuary churches. In the east, in a big city, on a main street, there thrives a mortuary church. Here a vast pane of glass reveals a "Japanese enamel cloisonné vase and carved wooden base, seven feet high over all." I quote from the catalogue. The "Douglas Service" catalogue, with pictures of the Douglas Mortuary Church. But life is stranger than catalogues. Let's go in.

A reception hall like the lobby of a Park Avenue apartment house. Small one-track carpet

trickling across furlongs of marble to the elevator. Marble floors, marble ceilings, marble tables. Ten-foot mirrors. Elongated brass urns. A fat-cheeked attendant—or salesman (Meet our Mr. Charon)—behind a shiny desk. The noiseless, self-operating elevator. More still, stone floors. A mail-chute. The Mortuary Chapel, built like a crypt. (Second-story crypt.) Architecturally speaking, reinforced concrete with one-quarter-inch Gothic. U. S. approved sprinklers neatly housed in the pendants of the vault. Wooden pews, holding prayer-book and catalogue. Open one: "Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live. . . ." The other: "What is the cost?" Electric fan. Palms. Two organs: hand and electric. Our attendant is a woman. "We place the body under the palms," she says, "regardless of wealth or creed." Six feet away on the other side of the palms is a tobacco factory.

More stone corridors. The Conference Room. Was a will ever mentioned here? Grand Rapids Empire. Museum of gold furniture. Dead white Statuary. Girl After Her Bath, by Professor P. Lazzerini. Nickeled Thermos bottle. Lily cups. More corridors. Mail chutes. The Family Reception Room. Chrome-gold Piano, grand; lid at half mast revealing obliquely on its under side French eighteenth century celesto-pastoral orgy.

Gold-table, sweeping curves, bow-legs, all gold. Forty-niner's nightmare of a skating rink. Crouching Venuses on pedestals. Brocade armchairs.

Next! The Napoleonic Reposing Room. Heavy Imperial curtains. A dead gilt clock. Imperial armchairs, stately, voluminous, not to be sat in, embroidered with imperial bees in symmetrical swarm. Old print of the surrender of Cornwallis. Steam radiators. Absence of Lily cups. The Inness Reposing Room. Arab warrior on pedestal. Museum chairs. Phantasmagoric clock. Full-rigged gilt table. One Inness landscape, in twelve-cylinder gilt frame. Weighty, preposterous curtains. Chill light from State Street. Valuable rug. "Look at the carpet," says the attendant. Another hall. Stone, mail chutes, marble nudes on pedestals. Finest examples of the difference between sculpture and statuary. The tapestry, the Renaissance, the Louis XV., the State Street Reposing Rooms. Marble bust of loving pair. Bronze de Milo. Chinese vase. Persian carpet. Standard Sanitary marble. American corpse.

In a gray stuffed casket, heaped with arranged flowers, the face of a dead man, thin, unearthly, luminous as wax. Is it real, or only a model? This, we are told, is the most popular room. Next is Suite F. Silent, embalmed carpets, statuary white and still as death. Easier to speak here of

auctions than of death. Another casket. A pale lifeless face, delicately inscribed with life's trivial, tragic discomfort. A woman of about forty-five. The attendant feels the two cheeks, at once, with a firm, expert, mournful pinch. "That's some of my work. She died yesterday."

More corridors. The Smoking Room. The Gold Room. "The famous Gold Room." The goldest of all the rooms. More Lily cups, in a neat little stack. Corridors, silent, stony. A glimpse of a room with women sewing large white things. "That's where they make the slumber robes." In a corner, large portrait of Mr. Douglas "as a young man." Marvelous organization. To quote from the catalogue: "More than one hundred employees are engaged in this great work. . . . In these rooms the remains repose in simple dignity or in the most sumptuous state, surrounded with priceless works of art gathered from the four corners of the globe. . . . A service man will be glad to call and discuss this subject at any time."

The Floral Department. A forest of ferns and marble. The invincible vase, the marble Venus that dies not, wreaths, a desk and a telephone, bronze of Father Time cascading ancient locks of hair, fallen asleep over a child in his arms. The office. Chart with names and dates of arrivals, service given, and a special column headed "Salesman."

Louis XV. skylights, terazzo floors, scratched ashlar, Mazda daylight, valances with ogee curves, whipped-cream sofas, fringed boudoir lamps, four-legged tripods, alabaster barber-shop ceiling lights, Fox and Crane Æsop jar, chorus of snow-white steam radiators, Kalamein wire glass windows, clutching candelabra, Carrara wantons.

There were seven arts. Here is the eighth, unison of all seven toward a beautiful exit from the world, with Venus, Sèvres, statuary, cloisonné, organ, Inness, dirge, fan and Lily cups.

. . . *Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery. He cometh up, and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay.* . . .

If we must leave the world with cost and ceremony, let in God's name the cost be little and the ceremony natural. A few words at sea, and the final splash of flag-wrapped clay into the sea. Mortal ashes on the top of a hill, blown along the grass and the heather on the hill by whatever winds may be passing by.

F.O.B. Detroit

They are out for a drive. And as they drive, they talk to themselves. More rarely, they talk to each other. When this happens, the printer shifts gears, and they drive on in *italics*.

FRONT SEAT. Too much oil. Just look at that smoke. Come on now, come on, baby, make the grade.

BACK SEAT. We might stop by Mrs. Purley's. Though I wonder if she'd notice. I promised her we would. I wish I'd brought my veil in case we do stop. Though I suppose we won't. My, aren't those trees green. My, they ought to fix this road. And if she did notice I suppose she wouldn't say anything anyway.

FRONT SEAT. The foot-accelerator squeaks. Some day I'm going to be rich enough to buy a car with no squeaks . . . It says 1288.4. I'd like to get a dollar for every mile. A dollar a squeak. Ten thousand a week. What's the interest on 1288.4 at 5 percent? At 10 percent? I'd like to find a hundred dollar bill in my sock every morning. Oh, boy, there goes a Chrysler. Wouldn't I like one of them . . . She's humming right along

now just the same, humming right along . . . *Say, Honey!*

BACK SEAT. *Yes, Henry, what is it?*

FRONT SEAT. *Did you lock the kitchen door?*

BACK SEAT. *Did I lock the kitchen door? Yes, I did lock it! I remember reminding myself not to forget.* . . . Now did I? That door ought to be painted anyhow. . . . Every time we go by here there's always wash on the line. I ought to have that old skirt washed over again. There's a pretty place. Pretty as a picture. I'd like to frame a pretty place like that and hang it up. Then I could have Mrs. Purley to lunch. *Oh, Henry!*

FRONT SEAT. *What?*

BACK SEAT. *The Purleys have bought a new car.*

FRONT SEAT. *What kind?*

BACK SEAT. *I don't know what kind, but I saw them all in it yesterday crossing the bridge, and it's new.* . . . My, the air feels good. I wish Henry didn't have to sit up there in front. I wonder if he shaved this morning . . . Better not. The last time I asked him he got mad. . . . There's a pretty bird. I'm going to buy a cage, a gold cage.

FRONT SEAT. Just made it! She's warmed up now. I'd like to go a thousand miles without stopping. Every hill on high. They say there are some cars can do that, but I guess they run by

steam. There's a big stone right in the middle of the road. Thirty-five, forty—I'd like to hold it right at forty all along. It gives you that feeling. . . . Here's where I pass this Buick. . . . Whee!

BACK SEAT. *Henry! Did you see that house?*

FRONT SEAT. *No—what kind was it?*

BACK SEAT. *An old homestead of some kind, I'm sure. Old brick chimneys. You never notice anything. It was lovely!*

FRONT SEAT. *I'm too busy keeping us out of the ditch.* . . .

BACK SEAT. Wouldn't it be nice to live in a house like that. I'd tear down that porch and plant lilacs and paint it up and put in a bathroom . . . a bathroom so fine, so fine that he'd want to shave every day. . . . *Henry!*

FRONT SEAT. *Yes?*

BACK SEAT. *I want you to buy a new hat.*

FRONT SEAT. *Well, I'm going to.*

BACK SEAT. *Well, I wish you would.*

FRONT SEAT. *Well, I will.*

BACK SEAT. This is the weather I like. Lots of clouds and lots of sky. I feel like floating. Look at that crow, floating so high. I'd like to be that crow and float away. . . .

FRONT SEAT. This little car is one of the best ever. I ought to have tightened those brakes. It's even better than the little bus I bought for our

honeymoon. I wonder where that car is now. . . . She used to sit up in the front seat then. I like it better this way. Gives me a chance to drive. Above forty-five she begins to rattle. If there was a rattlesnake on the road I'd cut him right in two. Zip, zing—and good-by Mr. Snake. *Zingo!*

BACK SEAT. *What is it now?*

FRONT SEAT. *I'm just enjoying life, that's all.*

BACK SEAT. *Oh, is that all.* . . . There's a funny smell. Must be from that house. Sounds like chicken liver. That's funny! As if a smell could sound. *Henry!*

FRONT SEAT. *What?*

BACK SEAT. *I just thought of the funniest thing; I just said it to myself.*

FRONT SEAT. *What?*

BACK SEAT. *Nothing. It sounds too silly.* Now wasn't that silly of me? But it did smell like chicken liver. Only I'm not hungry. I'm just happy, that's all. I'd like to be this way always. I'd like to roll in the green grass. I'd like to take that little white dog for a scamper-scamper across the grass. Only Henry wouldn't want to stop the car. He's such a good chauffeur. Those good chauffeurs never talk much. They just drive and drive and drive. A good driver isn't always a good husband. People always tell me how much he loves me. *Henry! I'm positive I did!*

FRONT SEAT. *Did what?*

BACK SEAT. *Locked the kitchen door!*

FRONT SEAT. That fellow over at the garage told me I was no mechanic. He's a liar. If he'd called me a liar, just once, I'd have bashed his face in. Mixed his map up good and plenty. If he ever got mean what wouldn't I do to him. I wish he'd get real ugly, just once; I'd show him. I wouldn't say a thing, no, not a word, I'd just paste him one right on the jaw. If he got up I'd paste him again. Gosh, that would be great. Only he'd have to get real ugly first. . . . That mudguard must be getting loose. *Now what's the matter!*

BACK SEAT. *What's the matter now?*

FRONT SEAT. *Carbon, I guess.*

BACK SEAT. *Oh, can't you get a new one?*

(Before either of them speaks aloud again, the car has passed five schoolhouses, two on right, three on left, crossed iron bridge over R.R., borne left with traffic, followed car tracks, scorned fresh peaches for sale, and swept by six boiler segments with geraniums growing in them.)

BACK SEAT. *I did want some of those peaches, dear.*

FRONT SEAT. *You ought to have said so, honey.*

BACK SEAT. It's going to rain. I always feel

sad when it's going to rain. When it does rain, I don't feel so sad. It would have been nice to have had some of those peaches for supper. Peaches stain the napkins. Sometimes brown, sometimes not. Anyway they stain. I don't like paper napkins. I wonder when Henry will get that raise. Mr. Edie is getting sixty-five a week Sometimes this car bounces so I almost can't stand it.

FRONT SEAT. Sunday I'll grind and reseat the valves, and then, believe me, she'll go. Some day they'll make valves you won't have to touch, ever. I'd like to give that girl a ride. Brother, she would say, I trust you. She looks like a good girl. There's a lot too many good girls in the world. Brother, I like your looks; take me for a long, long ride. I'd just talk to her, that's all.

BACK SEAT. *There's a rain-drop.*

FRONT SEAT. *I've got chains.*

BACK SEAT. *Henry! Henry! I remember now! The kitchen door isn't locked! I never touched it! We'll have to go back!* How careless of me. But Henry ought to have thought of it. Now he'll think me careless.

FRONT SEAT. I'd like to talk a whole lot. I'd like to be one of those orators now. Singing's fun too, if you know how. I'd like to stop the car right here and now and spell-bind that old farmer for fair! My friend, you know who I am, you know

that I know your needs. . . . Wonder how much that farm's worth. Catch me living on a farm Nobody to talk to.

They arrive home, and the kitchen door is locked.

BACK SEAT. *I knew it! I just knew it!*

FRONT SEAT. *Some trip, honey.* To Gaffney's from here is six miles, and there to Springville is three and a half . . . nine and a half and four and a half is thirteen and six again is nineteen. Forty-three minutes. . . . Not so bad, not so bad. . . . *Guess I'll measure the gas.*

Joiners

There is probably only one street in the United States longer than McCall Street, and that is the street inhabited by those who at one time or another went through a secret rough-house initiation, and were blind-folded, and swore a great oath to keep a small secret, and learned a password, and a complicated way of shaking hands, and so went through life fortified by the knowledge that they would never be deserted and forgotten so long as there remained alive any other member of the Improved, the Independent, the Royal, the Exalted, the Hermetic, or the Imperial Order, Union, Circle or Brotherhood of Oaks, Elks, Geese, Cubs, Fleas, Owls, Red Men, Yellow Dogs, or Galilean Fishermen.

Beginning with the Ku Klux Klan, the Masons, the Odd Fellows, the Elks, the Rechabites, the Daughters of Rebekah, the Moose, the Woodmen, the Knights of Pythias, the Good Templars, the Eagles, with anywhere from half a million to three million members, all the way down to little companies of secret fellowship that you and I never heard of—the Concatenated Order of Hoo-Hoo, the Hooded Ladies of the Mystic Den, the Mystic

Workers of the World, the Order of the Omah Language—there are probably nearer twenty than fifteen million men and women in this country who did, or still do, belong to a secret society. Mr. Arthur Preuss has compiled a dictionary * of all the secret societies he could lay his hands on. The dictionary is an official guide for Catholics—"a reference work on the subject of societies into which Catholics are liable to be drawn." Naturally it includes, for its purposes, a few evidently non-anti-Catholic and non-secret organizations, such as the A. F. of L., the Screen Writers Guild and Mr. Frederic C. Howe's 'Sconset School of Opinion, but for the most part it is an amazing collection of page after page of mysterious brotherhoods, a great many of which are anti-Catholic in sentiment if not by actual statement.

We Americans are proud of our native states, we belong to political parties, we deposit in banks, we become members of unions and alumni associations, but above all these in quantity and in the quality of peculiar loyalty we become members of lodges—we are Joiners. Surely there is no other country in the world with so many joiners, no other country in which such a vast proportion of hard-headed business men and their wives will rush to belong to something with a name which their children might

* *A Dictionary of Secret and Other Societies*, compiled by A. Preuss. St. Louis and London: B. Herder Book Company.

easily have invented—the Red Rovers of the World, the Oriental Rite of Memphis and Mizraim, the Order of Mules, the Sons of Jonadab, the Western Bees, the Pythian Sisterhood, the Lodge of Junior Conquerors, the Jovian Order—a secret organization of men engaged in the electrical industry, whose motto is: "All Together All the Time for Everything Electrical."

Let us not be in too great a hurry to confess to the world and complain among ourselves of our standardization, of our lack of tradition, of the too-obvious surface resemblance of one small town to another, of our United Cigar Stores, and chain groceries, and mail-order shoes, and universal dental creams, and inter-state facial expressions. There are forces among us working for mystery, and variety, and splendor, and secrecy, for harkings back to lost religions, forgotten mystic kingdoms of the East, faintly remembered rites. Let us remember that this familiar flood of straw hats in the street may conceal, here a sworn votary of the Ancient Order of Shepherds, there a Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret; here a Mystic Noble of Granada, there a Stag of the World. We have no king, to be sure, but we have a Sovereign Grand Inspector-General. We tell people to step lively, and watch this space, but these same people are quite likely to be Knights of the Ninth or Royal

Arch, and connoisseurs of a more flowery language. We have plenty of cops, stiffs, ginks, guys, birds, pips, queens, saps, janes, docs, plutes, wops and skirts, but this hurried, slangy monosyllabic, efficient society has also its full quota of United Ancient Druids, Tall Cedars of Lebanon, Royal Fellows of Bagdad, and Prudent Patricians of Pompeii of the United States of America.

As we travel about on the top surface of life, in the midst of the radio and the great daily newspapers, the harsh obvious light shed over most of our surroundings makes them seem unmysterious and modern to the point of being prosaically contemporary. We look back—a few of us—to richer, darker centuries, and their buried treasure of strange names, quaint customs, peculiar sects, secret beliefs, and mystic fellowships. But what fascination would not the historian of the future find in digging about our less-known corners? What wild conjectures would he not indulge in, what glowing reconstructions of another mystic-mechanical Middle Age, once he was on the trail of our lodges and secret societies? How people some centuries from now would be amused and charmed by a forgotten America which cherished, along with Fords and mail-chutes and file-cabinets and Lily cups, the Ancient Egyptian Order of Sciots, the Ancient (but not Egyptian) Order of Muts (Men

United to Serve), the Daytime Wives, the Exalted Order of Big Dogs (an association of musicians), and those who signify distress, when among fellow-members, "by placing the right hand over the left breast with the back of the hand out"? They will give us and our time some such name as mediæval, and they will not be far wrong. We brand the Klan as mediæval, but it belongs pretty much to our time, and to a society in which millions of men and women belonging to hundreds of little orders were ready to pour their separate secrecies, rites and prejudices into a larger, a national vessel.

The Klan, catch-all of ignorances and hatreds, is perhaps the sinister total of innocent items. Some of the items are extremely innocent. We wish there were less "lodgified Societies of Christian Endeavor," fewer heirs of Knownothingism, and more little clubs like the Knot-Hole Club, founded at Bristol, Tennessee, and now "spreading throughout the country under the auspices of the Rotarians." The Knot-Hole Clubs "represent a curious 'blending of religion with clean athletics.'" "An arrangement is made by the local Rotary Club with the management of the baseball park, by which any boy of fourteen or under, black or white, wearing short pants, is admitted to the park on payment of only ten cents instead of twenty-five cents, if he can present a card signifying that he is a member

of the Knot-Hole Club in good standing. To secure this card a boy must sign the following obligation: "I will attend Sunday School every Sunday except in case of sickness, I will not use curse words, and will lead a clean life. I will be a rooter for the home baseball team. . . ."

The Upward Classes

We think of European countries as divided into lower, middle, and upper classes, each of which, in spite of a certain movement from one to another, is more or less fixed. There are the same divisions in America too, but here the people who, whether through luck, hard work, talent or mere ambition, are moving from one stage up into the next, form a class by themselves, and it is certainly this class which is most characteristic of us.

Our national hero is the poor boy who sweats and studies after supper and so rises to be the president of a great company. His figure and the philosophy that enthrones him are commonplaces. We like to think of Ben Franklin chewing his loaf of bread and Abe Lincoln the rail-splitter, not only because we admire them but because they are symbols of the great prospects before any poor boy who thinks overtime. But they are not characteristic, for they got to the top. Of such as they, even including the bank vice-presidents, there will always be only a few. The characteristic figure, the one that gives its particular gesture to our America of today, is the man who is *trying* to get to the top, and what is most characteristic of him is the trying.

In the good old days such a man had only the good old indomitable purpose, the good old midnight oil, to serve him. Today he is besieged by all sorts of agencies pleading to let them give him a boost, and the variety of what they offer and the quantity of their advertisements prove that the upward man exists by the million.

To the minds of an uphill people the dollar is of course the proper quarry—that currency the more readily changeable into happiness when in quantities you do not yet possess. Teaching other people how to make more money is one of our largest businesses. If the orientals went in for selling happiness to others they would advertise not self-betterment, but self-sufficiency. Their magazines would be filled with invitations to tear off the coupon and learn How Life Can Be Enjoyed on Rice Every Day or How to Take Delight in Prevailing Winds. But here an eye roving in search of happiness meets with the headline: "We Can Double Your Salary in Three Weeks." Such advertisements are on nearly every page of that magazine which could not exist if we did not have a huge upward class, and which not inappropriately goes by the name of American. They interlard its stories, its interviews with big men, so that the ambitious clerk, by the time he is through reading "How an 'Ordinarily Stupid' Boy Became a Great

Merchant," is in the right frame of mind to "Say Good-by to $22 a week." These same advertisements are of course to be found all through other magazines whose rear columns sell automobiles, cereals and shaving creams to the more settled consumers who are not moving upward, but engaged merely in furnishing their niche in a particular class. The number of such advertisements in all our magazines proves that we Americans are probably the largest consumers of advice in the world. But the advisors appeal to will-power rather than to talent. The writers of the advertisements do not tell their victim that he is above the average, that he has brains and must succeed if only he will listen to them; they demand only an intense appreciation of success and an intense longing to attain it—in other words they appeal to the millions who are upward-class-conscious.

But dollar-chasing, if one of the most important traits of this kind of class-consciousness, is not the only one. The desire to be better off, to own nicer things, is merged with and shades off into several other desires. Your ambitious American finds a satisfaction in winning "The Secret of Making People Say 'Yes' " that is not wholly the result of a larger salary. If it is chiefly for money that he learns "how to become an interesting talker," "how to write better English," "how to meet more people

and remember their names," "how to analyze character at sight," "how to learn a fact a day," "how to gain or lose a pound a week," these accomplishments have derivative pleasures. There must be some pure unmercenary joy in having learned to transform small talk into major-general conversation. The ecstasies of becoming better are graded all the way from salvation to the daily dozen.

Your true upward-class man or woman isn't thinking only of how to be a better individual; he is anxious (since, as the flag follows trade, so good manners are considered to follow income) to behave properly among "better people" when he is one of them. But since income also has a way of following manners, he is as often anxious to enter prosperity through the gateway of politeness. That is the reason for the enormous sale of books of etiquette—guide books to the highest class for the foreigners to it, or the newly arrived in it, or those embarking for it. By this time pretty nearly everybody has seen the advertisement telling the sad story of the rising young manager's wife who spoiled his business chances by eating olives with a fork. The influence of business and good breeding on one another is inextricable.

No other class in America is thinking so hard about itself—wondering so acutely what it ought to eat, read, drink, how it ought to work, talk, sleep,

with what people it ought to mix. As a whole, no other class feels this hope of adding cubits to its stature by taking thought and correspondence courses. It is our only introspective class. Its members are people who go in for physical culture, who read popular books on mental science, who are responsible for the growing curiosity about the place of man in his world. They are the grandchildren of those pioneers of the days when to progress was simply to move farther west, and the sons of those who, lesser pioneers, became so by the lesser exploit of moving from a small town to a larger one. There is little of the physical left in pioneering these days. The onward wave is no longer horizontal, from state to state, but vertical, from class to class; the frontier recedes, not before the ax and plow, but before self-cultivation. And it is an uglier process, since so much of it is self-seeking and so little self-questioning. Ugly—yes, as ten thousand brazen voices calling to the worship of the "Bitch-Goddess Success" remind us every day; hideously ugly, commonplace, cocksure, gross, ruthless. Yet the ugliness is on the surface; there must be a finer spirit somewhere down among the ranks of these modern pioneers. Surely here and there poor clerks and accountants and stenographers are setting forth in prairie schooners of the mind.

But this class cannot forever march upward. American opportunities are narrowing day by day. There is no longer any certainty that a good man will rise to the top naturally like a cork. There are premonitory shadows of that day when, like an insect now bumping dismally indoors along the ceiling whose flight was once in the open air and restricted only by the frail power of its own wings, the upward class will find that it can't go upward any more.

Learn While You Sleep

A revolutionary discovery was recently announced in the newspapers. It appears that the radio has uses far beyond the dreams of its inventors. An unnamed victim, presumably of the male sex, was put to bed with a head-set over his ears. In a very short time, in spite of the obvious discomfort, he was sound asleep. He slept for the customary eight hours, during which time he was, unwittingly, the recipient, via the radio head-set, of considerable educational matter, all of which, upon waking up in the morning, he turned out to have learned by heart. From eleven at night until seven the next morning his plastic unconscious mind was assaulted by an explanation of the binomial theorem, the story of Washington's crossing the Delaware, an original proposition in plane geometry (with diagrams), select passages from "Hiawatha," and the irregular French verb meaning to pay a debt, or debts, or some, but not all, debts. At seven an alarm clock, broadcasted from Buffalo (the victim was in Terre Haute), woke him up. After a hearty breakfast (for study, even in sleep, induces hunger), he recited upon the matter which had just been pumped into his subconscious, and

was pronounced 60 percent correct. This is unbelievably high. It is high enough to get any one through any college. But the victim was not a particularly promising specimen. He was a replacer of defective parts in tractor transmissions, and had never been to high school. Therefore the results are all the more astonishing.

It is curious that this discovery was not made earlier. Of course, science has known for a long time that the mind in a somnolent, or even a somnolescent state, is peculiarly receptive to suggestion and even information. The psychological basis of the phenomenon is perfectly simple. The consciousness may go to sleep, but the mind never does. While the body rests, and the throat snores, the mind, like a racing engine in a motionless automobile, performs wonders of fantastic narrative. These are called dreams. The nonsensical intricacy of dreams is useless except for the purpose of deceiving a certain school of psychologists—some of whom are called Gypsies; others, more colloquially, Freudians. Dreams, since they serve no better purpose, must go. The space they now occupy must be filled. The fact that the dream-gap has never before been filled is a blot on the escutcheon of human intelligence.

In the wakeful state, the powers of the human mind to resist information and guidance are pro-

digious. In sleep, these powers are no longer exerted. Professors, unfortunately, have never recognized this obvious fact, and resent even the simulation of sleep in their classes, whereas, on the contrary, they ought to encourage it. But since nothing we can say will ever change the prejudices of the professors, we must turn to this newest development of the radio for the fulfillment of the nation's greatest need, education.

The prospect opened up by the experiment upon the man from Terre Haute is exhilarating. We are a nation of workers, Florida to the contrary notwithstanding. We hate to give up our work even in order to get educated. Several hundred thousand of us over the working age of eighteen are at college. These boys and girls will never give up the things that colleges are famous for, football, junior proms, sororities, pocket flasks, raccoon coats and glee clubs, in exchange for mere education. Many of them indeed can only study in their painfully acquired spare time. To all such, and to the great American public athirst for culture, the radio which teaches while you sleep will be an epoch-making blessing. People will at last have their cake and eat it too. Even the cake-eaters.

Taking a jump into the future, we can imagine the life of the average citizen immeasurably enriched by the discovery that knowledge can enter

into him, as it were, via the Ostermoor. Within a year or two, nine thirty-five will find Mr. John Gutz, citizen and monkey-wrench merchant, at his desk on the ninth floor of the Consolidated Asset and Liability Building. The day will pass in dictating letters, evading callers and biting the ends off ten-cent cigars. Mr. Gutz will go to lunch with a big customer, and tell him the story of the girl from Duluth. After lunch his routine will be varied by a personal call from the representative of the Learn-o-Radio Company, and Mr. Gutz will sign up for a six weeks' General Culture course. When he gets home, he will find the head-set hanging by the head of his bed. He will go to bed earlier than usual, but, being in a state of some excitement, will remember nothing, even though he heard it, of the first half-hour on the history of bee-keeping. Eventually, under the influence of a discourse on vital statistics among the janitors of Atlantis, he will fall asleep. From that point on he will begin to learn. By learning we do not mean that he will be training his mind, which has never been the serious purpose of education, but that he will remember, not in substance or in part, but in toto, everything which has been imparted to him over the radio. He will wake up the next morning to recall, with literal accuracy, the multiplication table up to forty-nine times forty-nine (which will help him in his business);

the full names, addresses and positions of all state and county officers (which will make him interested in self-government); the principal parts of speech in Swedish (which will go far toward solving the servant question); the Gettysburg address (for possible use on the Fourth of July); a list of all paintings by Rubens, the size thereof, the subject, and where now located (which will give him an insight into the world of art); and the name, price, and major specifications of every passenger automobile manufactured in the U. S. A. (which will increase his powers of conversation in the world of men). All at a moderate charge, without the slightest contribution of effort on his part.

Night after night knowledge (or information—they are much the same) will pour in upon him. Mr. Gutz will astound his customers by his familiarity with the populations of their native towns, and his miraculous grasp of the principal names in Persian literature will compel other monkey-wrench merchants to elect him President of their Association. But gradually he will find that the efforts of the radio company cause other men to creep up on him. Some of them, by sleeping late Sunday mornings, will even manage to surpass his knowledge of famous burial grounds in Missouri. But the radio people are ready for Mr. Gutz, and switch him, at a slight increase in price, to the Advanced Course.

Which is the same as the elementary course, only backwards. So that Mr. Gutz, if the monkey-wrench field isn't productive, can make a little money in the two-a-day reciting the Declaration of Independence from the signatures back to the thunderous culminating Whereas.

After Mr. Gutz and all his fellow citizens and his sisters and his cousins and his aunts have been playing Addison Sims forwards and backwards for a number of years, they will find happily filled up in their minds those chinks formerly occupied by thought—too much of which never did anybody any good anyway.

He's a Prince!

The political campaigners have reason to be worried. They are not, but they ought to be. Here they go, from one end of the country to the other, trying to get themselves elected, pouring millions of words into ears visible and invisible, but if they were more sensitive they would realize that a great deal of static is sadly interfering with the attention of the voters.

The static all comes from the fact that a nice looking young man in a well-fitting suit has stepped off a boat and is having a good time dancing and riding polo ponies. Lots of nice looking young men wear well-fitting clothes and ride horses, but this particular young man happens to be a prince, the Prince of Wales, in fact; the son and heir of a well-known king. Now, unfortunately or otherwise, we have no king, not even a prince, of our own, and we seldom get a chance to see one belonging to somebody else. So those who can, rush to see him, and those who can't, rush to read about him. Columns and columns and columns. Common sense and monopoly and the Ku Klux and Defense Day are nowhere. It's all the Prince. If the words already

printed about him were placed end to end they would form a double-track, standard-gauge line to the first King of England, whoever he was, with enough left over for a thousand extra copies of the *Social Register.*

If this nice young man isn't already wise to himself he can learn a lot of useful facts from reading the papers. If he doesn't know the color of his eyes one look in the *Daily Mirror* will tell him. If he doesn't realize that his coat is double- and not single-breasted a million Wales-fans will put him straight. If he is unaware that when interviewed he is nervous but will smile attractively just the same, a dozen lady reporters who asked him, "Will he marry an American girl?" can describe his smile to him so he'll recognize it in a crowd next time.

If he only knew how much we cared about these little details he would surely multiply them. If he only knew what a throbbing interest is aroused by his two Oxford, rubber-heeled, high-polished shoes, he would try to wear three. If he only knew how many of our well-dressed young men want to hear about his waistcoat—which they know better than to call a vest—he would hire a statistician to count the buttons.

We're glad he doesn't know. We're glad he doesn't see all that we are given to read about him. He might think we were a rather silly crowd of

people, and not realize that some go mad from thirst, some from starvation and others from not having had a king for well over a century. He is the first really square meal of nobility for years. No wonder we eat him alive.

No wonder we are told everything about him. Everything, everything. When he smiles he shows his teeth. When he raises his hat, his head is bare. A royal gesture. In the morning, he gets out of bed. In the evening, he gets back into it. It is not always the same bed, nor always the same hour. Sometimes he retires at eleven, sometimes at twelve, sometimes at one, sometimes at two-seven (Daylight Saving). When he has breakfast (usually in the morning) he eats; and when he eats he chews. When he smokes he lights the end of the cigarette which is not in his mouth. Does he get into his coat right arm or left arm first? Alas, we don't know yet—but give us time. At any rate, when he appears in public, his right arm is in his right sleeve, and his left arm is where it ought to be. When he goes out, his car (a high-powered Rolls-Royce) is driven by a chauffeur, on the right-hand side of the road. When he comes back, the car is still on the right-hand side of the road, but it is no longer the same side.

This is common knowledge. There are other things about the Prince that only a few people

know. They never hoard their knowledge. Sooner or later it all comes out in the papers.

"Yes, the Prince danced with me. I don't know why he singled me out. There were many girls just as attractive on board. We danced on Tuesday and again on Wednesday and Thursday. All the time he talked about his ranch in Canada. He's a perfect dancer."

"The Prince of Wales caught me on the jaw with a straight left. We were wearing 12-ounce gloves. The barometer stood at $4.32 to the pound. The Prince wore a light brown sweater. I said: 'Hit me again, Prince, like you did the first time.' He is a good boxer."

"H. R. H. shook my hand for thirteen seconds before going ashore. He has a good, firm grip. I've shaken a lot of hands in my time. He has five fingers, one of which I told him was called a thumb. He will make a good hand-shaker."

"The Heir to the throne of Great Britain wears a four-in-hand tie of double-ply triple-X Nippong silk, purple and red in diagonal, but not too diagonal, stripes. He told me he tied it himself. I think he has excellent taste."

"My Royal Rider mounted me from the port side just as the other ponies cantered on to the field. He uses both stirrups. He pulled gently but firmly on the snaffle, leaving the curb disengaged. His touch

with the whip was that of a gentleman and a sportsman. I don't believe all this about his falling off. He may have fallen with, but not off. Off is not With. When we got back to the stables the other ponies all asked why I hadn't got him to autograph the saddle. I said: 'Boys, there's a limit.' I think the Prince is a dandy horseman."

When this nice young man has gone home, he will leave behind him a large, but select, circle of people who met him, who handed him tea, who danced with him, who lent him their house, their car, their time, their dime, their cigars, who drew a laugh from him, or a bath for him. They should all band together into a great and imperishable society, united by a common vision, but decently separated as to social standing by some sort of formal degree. Thirty-second degree, the absent host; thirty-first, the young lady he danced with, and so on down from these Past Grand Masters and Exalted Ladies to the girl reporter who came near enough to see the invisible plaid in his suit, to the citizens of the county whose one mosquito bit him, to the young miss who saw him go by but was looking at the wrong automobile, to the post office clerk who canceled the stamp on H. R. H.'s letter but didn't know it Until It Was Too Late.

Young man, we're sorry for you. And please don't think us a bunch of snobs.

Enter Lloyd George

While tugs, mail boats, revenue cutters are hugging the flanks of the *Mauretania,* an unmistakable pink face, hatless, from which flows an avalanche of white hair, peers for a moment over the rail, and vanishes.

The lounge room is filled with the reclining figures of ocean greyhound fanciers, buyers for Macy's, and the second cousins of dukes. The newspapermen are in a corner, surrounding an empty chair, around which they push and crowd as if it already held an ex-prime minister. "What, Mr. Chair, is your view of the European situation?" A stir in the lobby, and upon a thin stream of gentlemen in black coats arrives an uncommonly chunky figure. Pencils are poised. What's to be the first word? Let's hope it's a good one. Lloyd George advances toward the empty seat, and flings the first morsel into the mouths of the hungry press: "So this is the electrocuting chair!" General laughter. A good line. Within four hours it's on every newstand in New York.

There he is now, at our mercy. The double-breasted broadcloth overcoat is durable and ancient like a cabman's. The Niagara of hair falls to its

collar. The eyes are narrowed, puckered to points of humorous light, inscrutable jewels in a setting of almost boyish pink. He is neither moved, nor nervous, nor self-conscious. He is thoroughly alive; he has always eaten life in huge chunks, and is still hungry. Questions from reporters are only little chunks, but worth chewing.

Such easy questions. Slow rollers. He fields them all without an error. The League, Europe, unemployment, Labor, golf, Wilson. Has he a message to give to America? No, only here to see things; yes, the situation is bad; anti-Semitism—"very stupid, isn't it?"—"I shall certainly call upon President Wilson; we worked for five months together in perfect cordiality and amity."—"When I play golf I shan't have any of the press round to watch me." Instantaneous and perfect change of mood from question to question: now casual, now thoughtful, now a touch of reverence, suddenly a burst of hearty laughter which shakes him, which opens wide his mouth, closes his eyes, and deepens all the little lines which are not just wrinkles, but decorations without which he could not call his face his own. At last he breaks from us, under a shower of unanswered questions.

We squeeze behind him onto the upper deck.

Off the port bow heaves a craft of uncertain type, *Nassau* by name, filled with waving, shouting fig-

ures, and bearing the placard: "Welcome, Lloyd George—great friend of the Greeks." On board it a band is playing, "Yes—we have no—bananas." Which no good newspaperman will fail to record.

On the top deck Mr. Lloyd George and Dame Margaret Lloyd George and Miss Megan Lloyd George are facing a semicircle of cameras and a frantic chorus of "This way, please—Look this way!" The head turns, turns, obediently, accurately, by fractions of an inch, with growing amusement but unchanging calm. The ladies have the expression of polite people being prevented from catching a train.

On board the little tug which is to take Mr. Lloyd George up the bay the ceremony is renewed, even more frantically. Cries of "Get the Missus into this!" "Mr. George! Mr. George!" "Ask the lady to smile!" A man who is not wearing the silk hat of official welcome gets in front of a photographer. "Hey, get out of the way!" Somebody nudges the photographer: "Don't you know who that is? James J. Davis, the Secretary of Labor." "Hey, Secretary, out of the way!"

Mr. Lloyd George is sitting in the tug's cabin, with a very large silk hat on his head and a very long cigar in his mouth, while his narrowed eyes range over the bay. By his side is Commissioner-of-Plant-and-Structures Grover Whalen. In the

background are numerous prominent silk hats, of which the most prominent belongs to Charles M. Schwab. Mr. Schwab and Mr. Davis are telling Mr. Lloyd George some funny stories. The wide little shoulders and deep little chest swing back and forth as if on hinges, and with them the cigar and the white hair, in uncontrollable laughter. "That's good! I say, that's good!"

There is lots of time before the reception at the City Hall at noon, so the tug passes out through the Narrows, and adventures briefly into the Atlantic. "We are now entering the Hudson River," says Mr. Schwab. Soon the tug turns around, and heads up the bay. Mr. Schwab closes the window in front of him, but Mr. Lloyd George is hardy, and lets the stiff breeze play through his back hair, which if it were a bit longer would flap like a silver flag. Just below, on deck, the faces of the newspapermen stare up at him, straining to overhear, straining to catch what words of wisdom may drop down to them from the great man along with the ashes of his cigar.

But his eyes never are allowed to catch theirs. He leans back to chat, he leans forward to admire, unconscious of the unofficial audience below the salt. He is talking naturally, meditatively, of a poem by Southey. Nobody else ever having heard of him, the subject is not continued. Somebody

mentions Ellis Island. Mr. Lloyd George does what is known as twinkle. "Geddes—I say, that was a nasty crack."

Gulls veer about the tug. "There are seagulls all the world over." New geographical items come into sight. "Very impressive." Mr. Whalen is acting as barker. Mr. Whalen, very tall, with a black mustache and of course a silk hat, looks like a stage villain gone good, very good, good enough to go to everybody's wedding, and always dressed for it. "That is Brooklyn," says Mr. Whalen. "I see," says Mr. Lloyd George. "This is Staten Island, which is completely surrounded by water," says Mr. Whalen. "I see," says Mr. Lloyd George. The skyscrapers of lower New York remind him of "a mediæval fortress." As the Statue of Liberty comes nearer, the cameras begin to get ready. Quietly, without any one's noticing it, Mr. Lloyd George removes his hat, so that by the time the oversized Goddess of Liberty is within the range of reverence, and the faded green patches on her drapery are visible, he is found to be appropriately bareheaded. Alongside comes a boatload of patriotic Welsh-Americans, waving their hats. Among them is an old lady dressed Welsh fashion, with a curious steeple hat, which she does not wave. Mr. Lloyd George waves his, for the 986,000th time.

We are approaching the Battery. We all watch

the crowds standing four and five deep. Mr. Lloyd George leans from the cabin to exchange remarks in a musical, exact voice with a young Welshman. The original Gaelic. It sounds like a kind of Oxford Yiddish, only more foreign. A young lady reporter, who has been watching her chance, dashes up to the cabin, stands on tiptoe, and asks Miss Megan: "Do you like to dance?"

Thousands surround the pier, line Broadway. From the nineteenth floor comes fluttering down a confetti of torn vouchers and shredded ticker tape. Cheers and cheers as Mr. Lloyd George passes by in an open car, on his feet, waving, bowing, smiling. A quarter of a mile away one can see the pin point of white which is his uncovered head disappear under the gloom of the elevated.

Once more, in the somber corridors of the Waldorf, the newspapermen gather to wait for the great man to talk to them. Handsome waiters slip past them through a forbidden door with trays of tea. Mr. Lloyd George comes out, we hurry after him. Four of us suddenly find ourselves alone with him in an elevator. As it takes us down only one flight, there is time to do just one thing. We shake hands with him by turn, not too ceremoniously. It would not have been surprising to hear him say: "My name is Lloyd George."

In the big gilt room he is hemmed in again.

Every one leans forward with his own favorite questions, and the questions trip over each other and fall headlong, and some of them never get to their feet at all. The serious ones about the Baldwin Cabinet and the Ruhr and the Versailles Treaty are poor seconds to jokes about how the band played for him, "How dry I am," and the Bananational Anthem. Mr. Lloyd George prepared himself for coming here by reading *Babbitt* and *Main Street*. "Brilliantly written—brilliantly." "Liberal reunion? Yes, I think it is coming. Yes, like all good things, it is coming"—with a sly twinkle as legible as large print. The head which will inevitably be described as "leonine" turns from questioner to questioner; the eyes which so many will refer to as "magnetic" open suddenly wide, and a new battery of furrows stands out on his forehead. Here again is the morning's lightning change from convulsive laughter to a meditative restraint, from confidential frankness to the easy smile of one who likes to prove that no question can be embarrassing. Here is abnormal sensitiveness combined with very little of the softer thing we know as feeling; here, with a heart at bottom not easily touched, are the subtlest antennæ to intercept the wireless messages that travel from mind to mind. Here are infinite self-possession and zest, charm and cunning, readiness, courage, quickness, and other qual-

ities answerable to a sort of animal sixth sense, all of them pointed in no particular direction, but responding marvelously to the winds of circumstance.

Some hours later a dense crowd is watching outside the Music Box Revue. Motorcycle cops suddenly dash madly ahead. A big limousine roars by, and there is a flash of white on the back seat. Cheers. A detective is standing on the running board. Something strikes his hat and splashes into fragments. In a second the car is gone. On the pavement are some little things which weren't there before.

Eggshells.

Nurmi Breaks a Record

Where once sat twenty-four votes for Oscar W. Underwood an equal number of Western Union Messenger boys are tearing around a wooden track. The boards pound under rangy young legs, and numbers flapping loose from eager backs tell us which of them is Pressman, Hellas, Butz or Sheehy. Through a light haze loom American flags, and black-hatted figures are tiered all the way to the Garden's roof. The crowd has come to see the big fellows run, but is not too impatient to kid the messengers as they rush by. "Go it, big boy! . . . That's form all right . . . I'm betting on 288." As the messengers finish, slow down, walk off patting the winner on the back, sweatered figures emerge in the interval before the next race to trot or spring independently around, exhibiting every known variety of leg action, every possible leanness or stumpiness of limb, every conceivable angle of nose cleaving the air.

Thirty-three events are to be run off tonight. Paavo Nurmi is the thirty-first. Before we get to him we must watch a medley of sprints, middle-distances, long-distances, walks, relay-races, by

girls, messengers, experts, world's record holders. Rather a long curtain-raiser for the great Finn. Yet all these contests between the weary and the not quite so weary, this multitude of legs straining, or flagging stubbornly, in good form and bad, will give us something whereby to judge perfection when it comes. It does not seem possible that there are so many kinds of legs, nor so many different ways to run. The winners are usually the simplest in form, leaving behind them thrashing arms, uptilted heads, rolling bodies, all those whose motions go off into other gestures than that of running fast.

Little girls rush furiously for half a lap, bent low like bicycle riders, their bright jerseys flashing in a crazy-quilt of speed. Over in the center of the arena a winner is being presented with a huge silver trophy. Under our noses a long race is ending, and the victor crosses the finish line just behind a poor wretch who has still the whole track to cover if he would finish too. And in the eyes of an inattentive crowd probably the last shall be first. In the mass the runners look alike, and one's desire to distinguish between Speppard, Btesch, Liljiberg, E. Egg and Earnest Opacity goes unrewarded. Now in the slack time between events trot miscellaneous figures, warming up. Among them a smallish figure in gray sweater and long gray trousers, rather slow, rather precise, rather erect, jogs up and down,

careless of all the others. A murmur in the crowd. "That's Nurmi!"

But his time is not yet. There are still several races, among them a long walk for which the previous record is some twenty-two minutes. Can such an interminable spectacle possibly be interesting? Yet it turns out to be fascinating, because so very different from any walking you or I have ever done. The heels must touch the ground first, and the knees must not bend, so in the effort to obey these rules and reach the height of speed the half-dozen bodies sidle swiftly in an alert upward-jerking step, A motion that seems ungainly, unnatural until one is a little used to it, and the monotony of an apparent effort not to run is transformed into the grueling necessity of walking faster than seems humanly possible.

As the races become more important, the crowd of judges in derby hats and dinner coats seems to increase. Their function is to hold invisible stop-watches in the palm of the right hand, and consult them with a sideways glance. One of them, portly with the unathletic roundness that only judges of athletic events seem to have, wears a silk hat. Surely his stop-watch is made of gold. Now comes the heart-breaking mile, and soon after it Willie Ritola, a lesser Finn, in the 5000 meter run. Nurmi is not competing, but for once we have

something worth comparing him with. Ritola starts off at a wide-stepping pace which surely he cannot maintain thirty-four times around the track, but he does, running apparently more against his own sense of time than against opponents.

Now at last comes the final interval. Nurmi is to run two and a quarter miles. There he stands, a tiny figure way down at the other end of the arena, taking off his gray sweater. The band starts playing something solemn, slow, undistinguished. The crowds, scenting a national anthem, rise as one man, with their hats off. They are right; the national anthem of Finland. Far down at the other end, stands Nurmi at rigid attention, his long trousers half-unbuttoned. When the anthem stops he finishes unbuttoning them and peels them off. A slow, ceremonious getting into position. The pistol. In a few seconds flashes by not a small gray figure at a jog trot, but a beautiful, slim, blond apparition in white shorts and blue jersey. The length of the stride and the energy put into it seem terrific for so small a figure. Very soon he is in the lead. Each time he comes around he seems just the same, and almost puts his foot down on the same place. He knows exactly what he is doing. He is not racing against the other men, but against time, with accurate knowledge to the second of how fast he must go if he is to break the record. At the third lap

he goes around in twenty-five seconds; half way through the time is the same; two laps from the end it is still precisely twenty-five seconds. And the motions made for each stride seem identical to the motions of the stride before, and from start to finish it is the same stride. The monotony of such regularity might pall, but after a few laps one becomes fascinated with a spectacle which might be part of eternity. He might always have been running; a year from now he may be running still, in the same place, at the same speed, with his arms forever economically reaching ahead, running a little too, his small neat head straight in the air, his body beautifully perpendicular. As if following some tremendous pull ahead of him, he seems to be running a little down hill, easily, without effort, in contrast to lesser runners, for whom the hill is always up. Not a sound, scarcely a parting of the lips, not a falter or unnecessary motion, not a single visible increase or slackening of pace. The others fall way behind; he passes, he laps them all, lightly, inexorably moving on and on.

A bell. The last lap. The crowds roar. A blue jersey flashes by the finish line, and this incomparably wound-up mechanism slows down, turns, stops.

And fifteen seconds have been shaved off another world's record.

He's Got a Kid and a Cadillac

The clean smell of young green leaves is on the air. The invigorating tang of freshly turned earth is on the wind. Dreams of wanderings, of the unknown miles, of sweet sudden exile steal into the mind.

The clean, invigorating smell of young gasoline mingles with the perfume of the leaves and the earth. Dreams of wanderings, of new paint, of new tires, of better mileages steal into the mind.

The slingshot and the fishing rod are not so well or so often made as they used to be. Clothes whose pockets were once filled with buckshot and earthworms are now soiled with oil and grease. The young men who used to play pool are now changing tires by the side of a concrete road. The business men who used to talk about McKinley are now talking about how-many-miles-to-the-gallon. The old fellows who were very wise about colts and could tell a gift-horse without even looking in his mouth are now swapping old fours for old sixes, old sixes for old eights.

The voice of the self-starter is heard in the land. Old rust is being scraped away, old rubber is being thrown out onto the speculative building lots, last

year's five-passenger is being tuned up. People who have been neighboring strangers all winter are coming together fraternally, gathering socially at the sound of a missing cylinder. The center of life, for months dormant, is alive again.

The silent stranger with the black beard and the long gun used to come riding into town, and the small boys and their grandfathers would crowd around him and stare and wonder and perhaps ask who he was and where he came from. Now there are open mouths and slouching peaceful loafers staring at the nickel-hooded runabout with the disc wheels and the license plates from the next state.

In the suburbs on sunny Sunday afternoons the family used to roll the lawn, and plant things and whittle. Now all the kids are watching or helping dad put in the new spark-plugs. Later in the day they will all go for a ride, not so much because the weather smells of spring as to see if she's running right.

I will lift up mine eyes to the hills. People used often to say and feel something like that. Now there are just two kinds of hills to an average young American: those you can make on high and those you can't.

People used to have large open fireplaces, and they cooked everything at them and sat about them when they had finished eating. A later period

glorified, as the center of home life, the kitchen range, the starting place of all good pie. Now people have steam heat, and go to the delicatessen store. The Lares and Penates haven't died. They are immortal. They have only moved out into the little garage with the galvanized tin roof, and people are worshiping them now just as much lying on their backs tightening the chassis nuts as when they were gazing at dying embers. The American hearth is now the Ford. Ford and home it is now, rather than hearth and home.

All this has come to stay. The Penates and the Lares have moved for good. Salt water may get into the Mexican and all the other oil wells, but America won't stop living on four wheels. Mr. Steinmetz will help us out. Electric Motors. Storage for a while, and later power transmitted by wireless. Thousands of cars humming along country roads between stone fences covered with uneatable raspberries. All of them moving by air-line power. Government power vs. private power: sparks through the air: the great social question of the next century. Instead of the Buick sign at the top of the grade, people will read: "Government juice makes this hill on high."

Way back in the days of coaches and flintlocks all the degrees of human value from noble down through gentleman and merchant to commoner

were translated into clothes. You knew a man's worth, in position and fortune, by the fineness of his linen and his beaver. Now everybody dresses alike, but if you want to know what kind of a party is going on down at number forty-two see if there are more Cadillacs than Buicks, or more Fords than either. The only street longer than McCall Street in America is Gasoline Alley.

Our neighbors' and our friends' accomplishments are measured by the car they own. It must of course be a new one. Car by car, one moves up from class to class. Sinclair Lewis tells us that when a Packard has been secured one is pretty sure of being safely near the top of the ladder.

Hear the young men talking about their college friends now living out west. (In some countries children have names. In America all cars have them.)

"Smith?" he says. "Oh, Smith's doing very nicely. Only twenty-eight, and he's already got a kid—and a Cadillac."

"Indiana Love"

April 1.

OFFICE BOY. There's a lady to see you. She says she's come all the way from Indiana on purpose just to see you. Are you going to see her?

PUBLISHER. Oh, hell. All right, show her in.

LADY. My name's Loretta Whistle. I have brought with me the manuscript of a book, which I have been writing for two—three—no, two years. It's about a love-affair, this man, this hero of mine, has in a small middle-western town. I read some parts of it to our Shakespeare club, and they said . . .

April 3.

PUBLISHER. Well, have you read this *The Wooing of Timothy Bean* yet?

READER. Yes. It's pretty good. Nothing new, of course. But quite plausible, quite realistic. I'd take a chance on it.

PUBLISHER. You would? Well, that's about my feeling. Yes, that's just about the extent of my own feeling. After all, our list is small this year and could stand a few extra titles.

READER. So, you've read it? In a way it's grip-

ping. That chapter at the altar. Quite gripping. Yes, almost gripping.

PUBLISHER. Gripping. . . . Well, well. That's good. No, I didn't read it all, but I got an idea. I guess you're right after all. I agree with you. Here goes.

April 5.

PUBLISHER. Sign right here, Miss Whistle. We're proud to have you on our list. It's a fine piece of work.

MISS WHISTLE. I'm delighted to be with you. Such a young firm too. The young men always have the best judgment. Now I'll want a copy of course to send to my mother, and one for each of my small nieces, and half a dozen to members of the club like Mrs. Fraser and Mrs. Hurmeyer—Mrs. Hurmeyer Junior, that is. And another copy for . . .

April 8.

PARTNER. What title are you going to give this book of Whistle's? I'm not crazy about it anyway.

PUBLISHER. What's the matter with *The Wooing of Timothy Bean?* That's a good title. And you're wrong anyway. It ought to sell like hot cakes.

PARTNER. Now if it was *The Loves of Bean,* maybe, or something like *Indiana Love* . . .

PUBLISHER. That's too crude; that's too much like a movie.

PARTNER. What's the matter with the movies? Now listen to me a minute . . .

April 10.

PUBLISHER. Miss Whistle, we've decided that a wonderful title for your book would be *Indiana Love.* It would also be very interesting to the moving picture people . . .

MISS WHISTLE. How awful! How common! I won't hear of it for a moment! I was trying to write literature, not movies. Do you think all my Indiana women friends would stand for it? *Indiana Love!* The idea!

April 15.

PUBLISHER. The wife's just crazy about that Whistle book. She says every woman she knows will want to read it. She's a woman; she ought to know. I tell you this is a woman's book.

PARTNER. All right. Then we ought to keep the old title. It's more respectable.

April 18.

MISS WHISTLE. I think perhaps you're right about *Indiana Love.* And it would be nice to get a lot of money from those movie people. But I like my own title.

PUBLISHER. No, Miss Whistle, we'll keep your own title. It would be the most advisable one. We'll defer to your own wishes in the matter.

MISS WHISTLE. Just as you say. Of course I like my own title best.—I've got to stay here another week. Can you advance me two hundred dollars?

May 18.

PUBLISHER. Well, did she read it?

FRIEND. Yes, she liked it fine. Says it's one of the best books she's ever read. And she's read lots.

PUBLISHER. Splendid. I think we ought to clean up on it.

September 10.

PARTNER. About time we began to do something with *Timothy Bean.* It's all set up.

PUBLISHER. I'll think over the advance work.

September 13.

PUBLISHER. But the most striking novel of all on our list is *The Wooing of Timothy Bean.* A gripping story of life in Indiana, not just small town life, but deeper, more romantic, you know, and real people, and heartfelt. It's going to create a sensation.

CRITIC. Send it along. I'll look it over.

WAITER. Your check, sir.

PUBLISHER. This is on me.

September 18.

PUBLISHER *(dictating)*. *The Wooing of Timothy Bean* is far and away the best novel I have ever published. I hope that you will review it yourself. It combines rich humor with spiritual fervor, reality with fantasy, strikes a new note in the study of the heart of the West, and— Now how did that last sentence begin?

September 20.

PUBLISHER. These are the three alternative jackets.

MISS WHISTLE. I like this one best with the silhouette of them kissing on it.

September 30.

UNDERLING. Taker and Baylor have ordered two hundred *Timothy Bean's*.

PUBLISHER. Great. Let's print another two thousand.

October 1.

PUBLISHER. I have every expectation that *The Wooing of Timothy Bean* will be a best seller. But

I don't care. It's a work of literature, and that's what I'm looking for.

RIVAL. I'll watch for it. Now my own big headliner is called *With a Lawnmower in Heaven* . . .

October 20.

PARTNER. A flop. A thousand-dollar flop. Look at the reviews. Look at the sales. Lucky if we sell eighteen hundred.

PUBLISHER. I never did have much confidence in that *Timothy Bean* book. It was too badly written. I wonder what made me take it.

November 1.

CRITIC. Why do you publish such stuff? Well-meant rubbish. Middle-west drivel of the kindliest futility.

PUBLISHER. I think you are right. But I like to help those young writers along.

WAITER. Your check, sir.

PUBLISHER. Let's split this.

December 1.

PUBLISHER. I value your judgment, dear, of course, but remember your reaction to that Miss Whistle's book. And look what happened.

WIFE. Which? That *Indiana Love*—no, that wasn't the name. Did I read it? What was it about?

PUBLISHER. I don't exactly remember, but we lost a lot of money on it.

January 1.

OFFICE BOY. There's a young lady to see you. She says she's come all the way from Virginia City on purpose just to see you. She's got a manuscript with her called *Minnesota Marriage*. Are you going to see her?

PUBLISHER. Tell her I've gone for a long, long walk.

The Higher Alcohol

A rapid survey of the latest issues of some of the periodicals devoted to special branches of the social sciences shows an interesting new trend, or, to put it even more categorically, tendency.

Among the numerous analyses of this tendency, or trend, to appear, by far the most analytical was, for it, an unusually intelligent article, of not less than 10,000 nor more than 50,000 words, in the *Chair Car Monthly,* which our readers will recognize as the organ of the Observant Pullman Riders' Association. The writer of this article confessed himself an experienced traveler, with a record of 131 Transcontinental trips and a yearly average of five days out of every week spent in chair, lower, diner or Pullman smoker. Certainly a graduated, probably a qualified, possibly a certificated observer. At any rate, one well worth listening to. And this is what he says:

Nine out of ten bootleggers, before they reached that high estate, had never occupied a lower, nor ridden in a Pullman, nor put up at any hotel charging more than $1.50 a night for bed and hatrack. In other words, the vast majority of illicit drink providers were men of low culture—great, strong,

silent, simple creatures, their pristine strength undiluted by civilized amenities. Men, we are safe in affirming, with souls untouched by art. At least, not until the touch of many dollars has softened them and lowered their resistance to art. For art follows the dollar, as trade the flag, as pneumonia the wet feet. The bootleggers were doomed from the start, doomed as soon as they set foot in the Pullman. But let our unnamed Observer tell the story in his own words:

"I have traveled a great deal, and rubbed elbows with and lent cigarettes to all sorts of people, and I know a bootlegger when I see one. I have traveled with these gentry many thousands of miles, and have watched the same story happen over and over again. . . . First the brash young bootlegger, with new yellow shoes, with a diamond stickpin the size of a monkey-wrench and just as beautiful. In the smoker this bird will open his grip and give you a sample drink, which tastes as if your tongue had stepped on a third rail. Nothing smooth about the drink, and no art in the man. . . . I have run across this same specimen six months later, and Lord, what a change! Slick and beautiful and oily-spoken. Only a valet could dress him like that. The stickpin has gone, and so have the yellow shoes, but there's still something wrong with the cut of his jib; people hesitate in the aisle to size him up,

and he knows it and feels mighty uncomfortable. . . . But give him another six months and the fruit is ripe. He has caught on. He's not flashy, but he's not like everybody else. Art is the only word that will describe it. The art of speech, of clothes, of eating; he no longer calls people 'brother,' he has learned to quit ordering two steaks at once, and if you look at him in his green plush swivel chair you'll see that his legs are elegantly crossed and that he is reading, not a magazine, but a book. Think what that means! A bootlegger reading a book. It's the greatest social change of the decade. . . .

"But the most curious thing of all is how such changes come about. All bootleggers who do any traveling are affected in the same way. I was in one of the smaller Middle West art museums once, and came upon a prosperous-looking individual gazing at one of the El Grecos. I thought I had seen his like somewhere before, so I accosted him. 'I don't know much about art,' he replied, 'but you can guess the rest.' Very soon he allowed he was a bootlegger, and at the end of a long and friendly chat he had given me a most interesting slant on the mental and æsthetic evolution of his profession, which I consider it my pleasant duty to pass on to the rest of the world.

"All over the country the taste of bootleggers,

not only in their own wares, but in more delicate matters, is improving by leaps and bounds. They are now the only class which is consistently wealthy enough to travel in Pullmans, sleepers, and to stop at luxurious hotels. From this point to a genuine interest in art is only a step. Take your impressionable young bootlegger now. He enters a Pullman for the first time in his life, and this first experience is overwhelming and lasting. He enters it from a crude world of ugly street-cars full of advertising matter, a world where he has been able to afford to ride only in jitneys, broken-down 1917 Buicks constructed without ornament and maintained without any genuine sense of beauty. From this world he is plunged into the most sumptuous and somber interior, a veritable rolling cave of art. The floor of this palace car is covered by the softest carpet of a most luscious green, and the chairs are daintily upholstered in plushy material to match. If the bootlegger leans back, his head rests upon an antimacassar of rarest lace, autographed in old-point, bluepoint or tatting with the Pullman arms and lettering. He gazes at mysterious landscapes, wonderful Union stations through pellucid panes of purest crystal. The woodwork, which in time he learns to call *boiserie,* is strictly oak, of a high and very beautiful finish, and a little higher up his eye may rest on some brief but none the less successful efforts at

stained glass. I have known sensitive bootleggers, after their first trip, to emerge from the Pullman incurable amateurs of Chippendale, Bokhara rugs and French cathedrals, and to lead thereafter lives of a culture and illumination denied to the rest of us, cut off as we are from Pullman Travel by the prevalent poverty."

A wise observer indeed, and one who has seen strange transformations. But his view of the matter is solely that of a traveler upon Pullmans. Of the influence of the newer hotel upon the bootlegger he tells us nothing. For such light we must turn to yet another organ, read secretly but widely, a fortnightly, by the name of *Higher Alcohol,* which is the voice of the more progressive and responsive bootleggers. On page thirteen we find the following suggestive comment:

"A friend of ours, one of the most successful and high class beverage merchants in the North, does more business in expensive hotels than anywhere else. We suppose that eleven months of his year are spent in a suite on the ninth floor of the ten-dollar-a-day *caravanserai.* But for two reasons, so he writes us, he is about to take to other channels. For one thing, our friend complains that the guests at these hotels are more and more exclusively composed of members of his own fraternity, and that the activity of a luxurious hostelry consists chiefly

of beverage merchants taking in, as it were, each other's washing. But far more serious than this merely economic factor is the moral and æsthetic one. Our friend spends his time in surroundings of the greatest beauty, such as cannot but have their effect on any man's soul. He finds himself drawn toward a life in which spacious lobbies, gorgeous chandeliers, furniture in the style of every Louis and Charley, platinum elevators, illuminated parchment lily-cups shall have a permanent meaning. Next year he plans to go to Europe, where obviously he won't be able to do any business. When he comes back, we suspect it will be to enter some other line, for his last word to us is the complaint that 'this Statler art is getting me.'"

Topics for Topers

As the dinner progressed, I got the impression that Colonel Williams was becoming intoxicated. He spoke to me at great length on the civilizing effect of the radio in the American home.—*Testimony of General Smedley D. Butler at Marine Base, San Diego, California.*

Mr. Jones. Great weather we're having. Personally, I'm all for the spring.

Mr. Smith. It's a remarkable time of year, if you like it. Green grass growing up everywhere, flowers coming out, birds singing, and so forth.—Thanks.

Mr. Jones. The spring. It makes you think, doesn't it? Along about now, I begin to get restless.

Mr. Smith. When I begin to get that way, as you put it, restless, I get out into the old garden and dig. Nothing like it to make you feel wholesome afterwards.

Mr. Jones. Take it where we live, out our way, there's hardly room for a garden. The houses there mostly run to lawn.—Whoa! That's enough.

Mr. Smith. I'd rather live out there where there's no housing problem than anywhere else this side of Florida. Now there's a real state for you.

Mr. Jones. Did you say real estate? I've never

had the pleasure to go down there. They say it's unusual. But a lot of parties that bought land there is going to get burnt.

MR. SMITH. My brother-in-law went down there but at the last minute he didn't go.—Here's looking at you.

MR. JONES. The Florida question is much discussed. I heard some Pennsylvania business men discussing it, and it was interesting. They said that some people had cleaned up on a big scale, but that others would get cleaned out themselves. It's a problem.

MR. SMITH. I'm told there's one development down there has lost one hundred million dollars. One hundred million dollars is more money than I've got.

MR. JONES. It was a hotel concern. They're hard to handle, unless you're an expert above the average. A lot of these big hotels are pretty big hotels.

MR. SMITH. Thanks, I've still got some.

MR. JONES. On the other hand, some of them are mighty nice to stay in. I had room 636 at the Statler once, and it was a dandy.

MR. SMITH. I had room 626 there myself, but it couldn't have been the same room as yours.

MR. JONES. No, not with that number.—Give me your glass.

MR. SMITH. Thanks. Well, this conversation raises a lot of questions in my mind. I recall that in one hotel, in Buffalo it was, I gave out some laundry overnight to be washed in the usual way they have. Well, sir, along about nine the next morning there was a knock on the door, and I said come in, and he came in with it. What do you think, it wasn't my laundry at all.

MR. JONES. Must have been some other fellow's.

MR. SMITH. That's just what it was, just exactly. Sometimes those big organizations depart from service.

MR. JONES. What do you say to just one more?

MR. SMITH. I don't care if I do.

MR. JONES. Service. Service. Yes, sir, that's what makes the world go round. If it wasn't for service there wouldn't be any U. S. A. worth mentioning. What Europe and the Near East and China and Japan and all need is service.

MR. SMITH. That debt question puzzles me. It all comes down to this point: Will they pay or won't they? I mean, can they afford to? Foreign nations are funny things. It's hard to get hold of their point of view.

MR. JONES. I wouldn't be surprised if that was the case.

MR. SMITH. I've known lots of foreigners, and there isn't one of them I wouldn't have known

was a foreigner right along. Something different. One of them said to me the other day, "Coolidge could never have been elected in our country." Now that's a peculiar point of view, isn't it?

MR. JONES. Your mention of Coolidge makes me think of something else. It seems there was a man from Vermont in our office the other day who didn't know that St. Louis was the fourth largest city in the Union.

MR. SMITH. I believe he was mistaken. Philadelphia ranks fourth, and Cleveland fifth, or the other way round.

MR. JONES. Is that so? but I doubt it. Detroit is third, so St. Louis must be fourth, because Baltimore is fifth. They go in that order.—Let's ring for some more ice.

MR. SMITH. Funny thing, how cities grow.

MR. JONES. They repay considerable study. Were you ever in Atlanta? They've got a question there, what with the Negro and all, that's worth discussing.

MR. SMITH. I heard a lecturer say the Negro is the originator of the all-American folk song; the jazz, the blues, they all come from him.

MR. JONES. They call this the jazz age in some sections I've visited.—Fill her right up to the top.

MR. SMITH. And the magazines, and the movies, and all those other things, and the inventions,

and the expansion and the general improvements. There's no doubt it's an interesting age we live in. If I had my life to live over, I couldn't do otherwise. How was it with you?

MR. JONES. How what?

MR. SMITH. How was it with you when you were a boy?

MR. JONES. Much the same, much the same. A little more religion maybe. A little less of the other thing.—This last one tastes funny somehow.

MR. SMITH. It has its effect on the stock market. There's an institution for you. They don't make institutions like that every day. Now I nearly bought some last week, and it went up and up and up and now look at it.

MR. JONES. It's an unhealthy sign. Those bears. I'm glad I've kept clear of it. Those bulls.

MR. SMITH. Now in the case of these automobile stocks, why, they're the backbone of the country. Do you realize that in 1924 alone more cars were produced, per man, woman and child, than were produced in 1923? Think that over. Just deduct the cars that weren't sold, and even then the figures are tremendous. Where would we be if all this was to break down? Who would feed your wife, and my wife? If they want a better arrangement, why don't they do something about it?

MR. JONES. I don't think so.

MR. SMITH. Now we have a car in my family, you'd better know that right away. We've had it now two or three years. It's like a brother to me. We all go riding in it, and come back home again. Do you know what I mean by an influence? Well, sir, that car is an influence. It keeps my home together. My boy fools with it, and my little girl fools with it, and it keeps us all together. We go places and see things my father never thought of seeing. My little girl sees things. Last week I let her have the wheel out on the main road. We nearly crashed into him but quick as a flash the kid cut the wheel and nothing happened after all. Now that's what I mean by an influence. Responsibility plus influence equals home-life. The same thing applies in every one of the forty-eight states. —How about just one more won't hurt us?

MR. JONES. I guess I've had enough.

An Ice Man Remembers

[*Time: 1960. Place: The home of* HAROLD ("RED") GRANGE *in a western city. There is a stuffed football over the mantelpiece.*]

REPORTER. Mr. Grange, I want to include you in the series on Great Figures of the Past I am writing up for the McWhee Syndicate.

MR. GRANGE. Go ahead, go as far as you like. Ask me anything.

REPORTER. Thank you. Now, you see, a new generation is growing up who don't remember those days, the grand old football days, I mean, and they ought to know the facts about something they just missed.

MR. GRANGE. Those were the days.

REPORTER. Now, I've been digging around in the morgue some and there's a pretty interesting morgue on you personally that I'd just like to check up on a little.

MR. GRANGE. What do you mean, a morgue?

REPORTER. It is the place in a newspaper office where they collect in all the clippings on a certain party and keep them there. Now, in one of those clippings it tells how, right after the first game in

New York 'way back in 1925, you made a talk over the radio, broadcasting it was, and you said the spiritual rewards of the game were a lot bigger and better than the material ones, or something like that to the same effect.

MR. GRANGE. Spiritual? Wait a minute. . . . Spiritual. . . . Oh, yes, I remember! But between you and I some other fellow must of wrote that up and I spoke it for the radio. I just spoke it, that's all.

REPORTER. I won't mention that. If you said it you meant it, no matter who thought it up. Now, what did you mean? Can't you elaborate that sentiment?

MR. GRANGE. I suppose I meant something like what I said. Fix it up to suit yourself.

REPORTER. Leave it to me. Here's another point: there was a check they gave you for a thousand dollars for your name for some tobacco or cigarette, and it came out at the same time that you never smoked.

MR. GRANGE. A check for one thousand? No, I don't have any recollection of that transaction. I never smoked in my life. The tobacco people must of known that.

REPORTER. One more thing: you said—this was also in 1925—that you aimed to make just one million dollars and then you would go back to your

home town and become a prominent citizen and ride around in your car.

MR. GRANGE. Two cars it was, two cars. And before you go I want to show you my new straight-twelve. Some car. But now, about that million: I always said the first million was the hardest, and it was. I didn't figure for a while, because I only read the headlines about myself, that a million gross was only half a million net, because my manager Pyle and I, we went fifty-fifty on all takings. So, after the season was over, when I played thirty times in eighteen states, and before doing that athaletic film, I took on a few commercial propositions. There was a Red Grange vacuum cleaner, and a Red Grange hat, and a couple of garter companies, and a new style collar and a chocolate sponge nut bar, the Red Grange Mouthful, and maybe three or four other little industrial items. Anyway, I was pretty near that million when I was told about income tax, which was some surprise and looked as big as a twenty-five yard penalty. So I got busy and went in on vaudeville all summer, doing an act where I was tackled just across the goal line after a long run off stage. There was a girl in it, too, and a lot of chorus men for the cheering section, and it went over big. The coon coats alone cost about seventeen hundred dollars.

REPORTER. Did you marry the girl?

MR. GRANGE. No, and I'll tell you about that since you insist. Out on the coast when I was doing that film and met a lot of movie queens of course, but there was a girl there she was the daughter of a prominent football trainer and the only woman I ever met knew the difference between a skin tackle play and the other kind, so we got married.

REPORTER. Now, just tell me a little something more about that movie film you were in.

MR. GRANGE. Well, I was signed up for three hundred thousand dollars' advance on percentage and they said they never saw a fellow who screened so well, and they were going to call it First Down Dearie, but they changed that to The Big Kick, which finally in the end they named it Touchdown Red, and it was all about a college football player who can't make more than two yards at a time except he sees his sweetie in the grandstand with some other rival fellow, and then he blows the lid off and the score is 77-0. But they changed that afterwards to a real close score. Anyway, I had a terrible time what with those California movie supers always off-side and forward passing into the ground, but what could you expect for ten dollars a day and what with the fact that my nose got busted and they had to hold up the love scenes and it cost them one thousand bucks to have a big eye,

ear and nose specialist come over from Los Angeles every day for three weeks.

REPORTER. What is the most exciting play you remember?

MR. GRANGE. Well, there's one play that I keep thinking about time and again. It was on November 3rd, 1926, in the St. Louis Stadium against the Missouri Imperials in the last quarter with the score 16-13 against us on the twenty yard line. Winkler, our quarter-back, gave the signal for a zone forward by me and just before the ball was snapped back, Wally Buck, you remember him, said to me, "It's raining," and that set me thinking so that I threw the ball to the wrong zone for an incompleted which cost us the game because on the next play their end tripped over himself and left a hole a mile wide open through which I would of taken the ball for the winning score on the next play. Yes, sir.

REPORTER. Are you interested in politics, Mr. Grange?

MR. GRANGE. Not exactly. Senator Auerbach down the street could tell you a lot about them if you want. You know he used to be the famous end, Shoestring Auerbach. But for two years I was president of the University of Illinois's Alumni Association, if that's what you mean.

REPORTER. How's your weight?

MR. GRANGE. At that time it was 172. Then I lost 2½ pounds. The next year I was up to 180. In 1942 I got down to 168 for a couple of days. Now I'm somewhere around 235.

REPORTER. Won't you recall some of the features of those early days?

MR. GRANGE. It wasn't all straight sailing by a darn sight. They all panned me for turning pro. Then we lost a lot of games, and I got tired and didn't play good and the crowd handed me raspberries and I couldn't go through with all my schedule, calling on governors and getting the freedom of cities and that kind of stuff. Besides, I was getting hurt all the time and might of got hurt worse any time. But I made that million and only the next year they up and passed this National Injurious Sports Act. And then good-by football.

REPORTER. Will you let me have your photo, Mr. Grange?

MR. GRANGE. Here's a couple of stills as they used to say in the old movie game. I'll autograph one. I've done a lot of autographing in my time, kids footballs and albums and what not. You know one year seventy-six ice men came to ask my advice about how to improve their finances. They were good boys, and I gave them good advice.

REPORTER. You've got a nice house here, a dandy.

MR. GRANGE. It cost us a lot of money. Now come with me while I show you a thing or two. This dining-room now has 6600 cubic feet of air space, which is unusual in a dining-room of this size. Here's where we plan an additional wing for next year with a sun parlor and a gym, maybe, for the kids—my son's kids that is. What do you think of this bathroom? Right up to date. Along in here is the kitchen. Here's the point: everything is electrical, like it is all over town nowadays, except one thing. I won't have an electric refrigerator. Good old ice for me. I pile it in the ice box myself every day, just for old times. You know I used to be an ice man before I played football and went to school. I got my first job from an ice distributor who bet me five dollars I couldn't shoulder a 300-pound cake. But I did, and that's how it all began.

REPORTER. Don't you ever regret those fine old sporting days?

MR. GRANGE. Well, I'll tell you. I'll tell you now what I told them then at the time: I liked football all right, but I didn't like it well enough to play it for nothing.

The Cave of Winds

As you wind your way through corridors and up staircases toward the Senate Chamber, you are suddenly aware of sound waves of unusual violence, coming as if from the bowels of the earth, hardly animate, yet somehow familiar. A little nearer, and you will recognize it as the roar of human surf beating upon the political shore. You cannot hear the words, but you realize from the tone that the emotion behind them is anger, and their purpose denunciation. Only after two or three visits do you learn how often pride, prophecy, or mere information are pitched in the same indignant key.

Once inside, you look down from the galleries, as would a spectator on the brink of a bear-pit, into the Senate Chamber. Like a bear-pit it is, or a swimming pool filled with air instead of water, and bottomed with a great green carpet of a sea-floor. At this first glance, it seems full not of Senators, as possibly you expected, but of desks. Instead of dozens of important, attentive faces you see one heavy man, pink and smooth faced, with the largest sector of his anatomy covered by a great white waistcoat, on his feet and talking, or rather

roaring, to a small audience of other less remarkable looking men, some of whom are reading papers, others writing busily, or leaning back half-asleep, or talking quietly together and occasionally breaking into subdued laughter.

The speaker knows that the laughter is not meant for him, and paying no attention to it, he goes on and on. His once neatly parted hair flops untidily, his black coated arms and large white hands sketch, in passionate angular gesticulations, an accompaniment to the despair or scorn or pleading of his voice. At one point some senatorial figure pokes itself part way through the swinging doors, and, seeing that Mr. Heflin of Alabama is still at it, beats a retreat. Nothing, apparently, will stop Mr. Heflin. Though he is mopping his face now after that last sentence, and shifting papers on his desk, the stream, temporarily halted, will flow again, carrying along on its harsh flood a broken, discolored ice-jam of statistics, reminiscence, warning, vituperation. From no cold reading of his words in the next morning's *Record* can you conceive the prodigious hoarse wind which first fluttered them through space.

A speech by Senator Heflin is like an over-hot bath; immersion may be exciting, but you cannot stay there long. Inevitably your mind wanders back to the audience. Instead of ten thousand

eager upturned faces from Alabama, there is only the Senate Chamber, calm and sparsely populated, with its white walls and luxuriant green floor. By each desk is a spittoon, of a green attractively in key with the rest. Opposite the desks, almost within an alcove decorated by a brilliantly new American flag, and behind a formidable desk, sits a slight, red-headed man, with one finger laid along his cheek, rocking very gently in his swivel chair: Calvin Coolidge. High up, above Mr. Coolidge, above the patient clock, are successive tiers of benches faced with white stone—the press gallery —from where, unless something unusual happens to fill it, one or two young men are staring down into the green pit.

Some Senator has suggested the absence of a quorum. The Secretary, in a voice to be envied even by Senators for its volume, begins to call the roll. "Mr. Ashurst, Mr. Ball, Mr. Borah . . ." Bells begin to ring somewhere outside. Out of the first dozen names only two or three answer "Here." But here they begin to come, the dimmed baldness of their heads forecasting their arrival from behind the glass doors. At first, they seem as much alike as some gathering of business men. Slowly the different types detach themselves, the figures of retired generals, of magnates, of farmers, of brisk rotarians, and the few slow-moving extant speci-

mens of the real Senator, with his tail coat and dignified mane of hair. From their seats, or in murmuring groups in the rear, they answer to their names. ". . . Mr. Willis" and a final "Here" rends the air. The late comers stand up to be recognized. Mr. Page of Vermont puts his white head through the door, answers, and goes out again. Yet there is not a quorum. The names of the absentees are called, with a yield of perhaps four more "Here's." A lull. Still no quorum. Two late comers saunter in. "Here." At last, a nasal announcement from Mr. Coolidge: "Forty-nine Senators having answered to their names, there is a quorum present."

There was, there is no longer: many of them have trickled away, back to their offices, the marble room, the cloak-rooms. Gradually the Senate thins down to its average working quorum of fifteen or less diggers at piles of papers, or conversationalists, or the few transients who drop in between trips to the cloak-room, the casual listeners, the habitual listeners, the listeners who manage to read at the same time.

Perhaps you wonder at this small audience. Do riveters like to hear each other riveting? Do pile-drivers watch other pile-drivers for fun? While the East Wind is blowing, does the West Wind stand about with an appreciative ear? The Sen-

ators can read all about it next morning in the *Record,* and besides, their real work is done in committees, in caucuses, in haphazard conferences. Yet occasionally they miss something.

All but a dozen of them missed, for instance, the fine display of steamrollership administered by Mr. Lenroot of Wisconsin to Mr. Bursum of New Mexico, on the occasion of the latter's bill providing that all the emergency officers of a certain percent of disability be retired on the same terms as regular officers. Mr. Lenroot has a great hammer of a voice, clanging mercilessly, bitterly, like a fatal trap, and it goes well with an impatient face, hard and cornery, as if forged, or carved hurriedly out of ironwood. He stands rooted behind his desk, and whips Mr. Bursum with proof that he does not know his own bill, that his arguments would not be surprising if they came from a Democrat, that he has no conception of its consequences, that he did not know, and does not now care, if he creates a precedent whereby inevitably Civil War and Spanish War veterans must be retired at an additional cost of half a million. While this metallic thunder comes from an angular and savage man, Mr. Bursum stoops a little; he sits, an excess Republican, among the Democrats; he has no presence; his features are blurred, uncertain, as if once of wax that had slightly melted; his voice

is trailing, indistinct, defeated; he moves uncertainly about, forward to plead an answer, back wanderingly to his desk to look up a document, which, after long pawing, he cannot find; the logic of his argument, hazy, ineffectively defiant, seems to demand that he go in and out among the desks, as if vainly pursuing its conclusion.

Another day we see Reed of Missouri in action. A one-sided man, with a dark bitter talent for improvised speech which he uses only in destruction. He never throws or squirts his vitriol, but pours it out drop by drop into perfectly formed little pools of sarcasm and hatred. After each sentence he waits for the acid to corrode its path into evil, and moves slowly a few steps to the right or left of his desk. A plain figure, neither fat nor thin, in plain blue clothes, with short business-like gray hair; features scornful, a little ascetic. His words have rhythm, design, but his voice none, breaking after periodic lulls into loud, dangerous tones; a clear-cut voice, of a few notes, except for times when, as he leans forward, it shrivels in an ecstasy of sarcasm.

Perhaps Wadsworth of New York, speaking for the officers, will reply to him. A shapely bald figure, very straight, young and vigorous, in a black cutaway; cold, incisive, with a voice of Eastern cultivation, in which a deep, intolerant anger

moves just below the surface. Even when he is not angry this tone can be heard. I can see him respecting his anger, feeding it, taking it out on a leash for exercise, bringing it back into the Senate tugging to be heard, but still on leash.

Other Senators, once heard and seen, stand out from the mass. Willis of Ohio, voted by the stenographers the handsomest man in the Senate, modern, still athletic looking though over-weight, with a pitiless voice like the forcible mutilation of sheet iron. McCumber of North Dakota, drawn and hook-faced like an albino Indian, from whose confident chest come long noises of hearty dullness, marred by "s" sounds whispering through the big words. Brandegee: too high a whistle for so heavy a locomotive. Norris: a pleasant, ungainly figure, a little white and tired, with a warm, honest, alert bass. Overman: maned and dignified, calm, old-fashioned voice, rumbling and broken with an involuntary buzz. Lodge: small, straight, dried, distinguished, speaking with joyless precision. Borah: an ominous figure, the small black cloud in the sky, which may at any moment overcast all heaven and pour down a dark hail of passionate, earnest, masterly eloquence.

At the beginning of the day, the big winds have not yet begun to blow. This sunny calm is the time for Senators to come in, read their mail, in-

troduce bills, pay visits. It is a time of long friendly handshakes, jokes, agreeable tête-à-têtes, pats on the shoulder. Walsh of Massachusetts glances at one of the Hearst papers, and nothing is visible from behind the pages but a scant formless crop of hair and a bulky expanse of cheek and jaw. Tom Watson, whose hair is perfectly heaped in the lesser Senatorial manner, is examining his income tax blank, which he holds with delicate, if unconscious poise. The Beavers are at work: Warren, Walsh of Montana, Jones of Washington, whose honest back may be seen at almost any time bending over his desk, bending so diligently, even through the roll-call on the Yap treaty, that he inadvertently votes against it. On the left a small group is chatting: Moses and Johnson, seated, and Cummins and Wadsworth. Moses is making a mock speech to them in a low voice. Wadsworth and Cummins are amused, while Johnson fills Moses' coat pocket with torn scraps of paper.

The only time they can be seen all together, at full length, is when the President addresses Congress, and eighty-odd Senators tramp through the huge rotunda under the dome, toward the House, in close file, with solemn, sedentary step; a double column of successful men, showing curves graceless but importantly round.

Another day. There will soon be a vote on one of the treaties. An actual, living quorum is present. Seldom-seen figures are out of their haunts: Elkins, with swinging step, a childishly naked head set on a neat blue suit; Ernst, trim and crisp, like a retired colonel of pony cavalry; New, of inelastic gait, expectant unambitious back, a small head as if pulled, with its too-prolonged shoulders, out of an over-heavy body. Few are at work, only Jones and Warren. Borah comes slowly out of one of the doors by the throne, stops in the center lane, with his head turned back, to take in, a trifle mockingly, the words of the speaker of the moment. There is a low hum of talk. Lodge is in his seat, motionless, cherishing a dead cigar. Turning suddenly to his neighbor, he makes unbelievably swift and fragile gestures, conveying unbearable impatience. In a few moments he is saying something to Underwood, both of them standing in the center before the reporters' tables. Underwood understands, goes over to Reed, who is speaking and who answers his inaudible protest with a sharp "No, I'm not killing time; I'm speaking now." There follow last minute reservations from Democrats; interminable roll-calls.

As the secretary's monotonous boom rolls over the names, you sit back a minute to consider this gathering, our house of lords. Pictures come to

you of long, hard-working, mediocre lives, of beginnings in small offices labeled "Attorney," of endless smaller men, persuaded, routed, or added to a growing list of faithful friends, of racking days and nights spent in party war councils held in small towns, in small rooms vague and heavy with cigar smoke; of hundreds of angry, booming, windy, empty speeches on creaky platforms, in conventions, at county fairs, from the rear end of trains. You think of the kindly, limited party work-horses who have found in this room the final goal of dreams, and of that smaller company who still feed secretly in their hearts the last flicker of Presidential hopes.

Fancies, as you sit hunched and dozing in the gallery, fade into dreams, dreams into nightmares. Visions and portents haunt you, of a cave where all the winds are now chained, now free; of colonies of confident geysers, spouting alternately, of important toothless lions roaring at old bones and old shadows, of Senator Sirocco shaking, in one peroration, all the apples from all the apple trees in Alabama.

Your eyes swim; the Senate Chamber fantastically darkens; the carpet dissolves, rises like a flood until all you can see through its green fathoms are dim globes, gleaming obscurely, the bald heads of Senators now swallowed, crustacean. . . .

"McCormick, McCumber, McLean, McNary, Moses, Ladd . . ." a monotonous rumble half-awakens you. You have heard that kind of sound somewhere before. A midnight station, a full-throated conductor . . . "Next station McCumber, change for Moses Pond and White River Junction . . ."

Change for what? Change for the better, perhaps? Let us hope so, but let us not hope too high for our Senators. Let us change them if we will, if we can; have in new heads, new chests, new throats, but will not the winds that blow out of them be the same, always?

Arriving with Joseph Conrad

She is a big ship, the *Tuscania,* as she rises above the Staten Island skyline. Too big to be a ship. A sea-going hotel, all iron and bell boys and landlike immobility. Except for the smell, one might just as well climb into the third story of an office building as go aboard her.

Joseph Conrad is on deck. He has never been in America before. He is a celebrity, a big man, a distinguished visitor—which is more important in the eyes of many of us than being a great artist, so we newspaper reporters go down the bay to meet him, some of us because he is a great artist, others because every celebrity who passes the Statue of Liberty must be made to talk.

In little sea-smelling corners near the Captain's citadel we wait to devour the celebrity. We are getting ready to ask him what he thinks of prohibition, if he first went to sea in Poland, if he likes Al Smith. Fortunately Christopher Morley is with us, and puts us in a more listening mood. "We'll just go a few at a time into the cabin and let him talk."

Over the rail can be seen the leaden, glistening harbor, criss-crossed with shrill whistles in every

key, with quick-melting little puffs of steam, as if all the vessels were selling peanuts.

Here he comes now, surrounded by both those who would protect and those who would attack him. The figure of a visitor, not a seaman: black derby, white scarf, black overcoat. Proper costume for a floating hotel—the largest ship he has ever been on. An acknowledgment of the presence of land, the invasion of the sea by the land.

No one's protection is any good against photographers. They steal him from us, back him to a wall, shoot him with large, small and medium cameras, take stills and movies, take him from East and West, with his hat and without it.

It is the only completely human, experienced, readable face in the small crowd on the deck. It is a face of a myriad fine lines, quickly passing mobilities, shadowy expressions. At first it looks stern, aristocratic, self-sufficient, but under the stare of the cameramen what seemed stern becomes tragic, what seemed aristocratic, noble, and the self-sufficiency gives way entirely to a look, in the eyes, of generously helpless fortitude. It is cruel, that camera cannonade, but without it should we have seen flicker, across those seeing, brooding eyes, the shadows of past days?

Finally the boys whose business it is to make a dentist's chair of every liner's bridge let Mr. Con-

rad go, and he is ours. With the horrible example of the photographers before us we treat him with uncommon decency. We ask him not too much about Walt Whitman, about American literature. With the nicest smile in the world he tells us how little he knows: "My mind isn't critical. I haven't got enough general culture for criticism. A sea life doesn't fit one for that."

It is a strong low voice, modest and simple, with the natural double richness of a foreign mellowness and strangeness of pronunciation and a better command of English than have any of us. After a few awkward pauses when we, by not asking him too much, are trying to tell him how much we like him, he begins to talk, for moments, almost as if we weren't there.

"I really don't like writing," he says; "it is a frightful grind." We try to get him to talk about literature, about his novels. What he really wants to talk about is the sea, which has been all his life, about the "magic monotony of existence between sky and water," about ships on which he has sailed.

"I have a great feeling for the little *Otago.*" That was his first command, and Captain Conrad —he remembers how proud he felt when the agent called him "Captain"—sailed her from Singapore to Australia.

"They had such good names, those ships. *The*

Duke of Sutherland was the most prosaic one. *Skimmer of the Seas, Otago, Adowa, Tremolino.*" He says that last name over thoughtfully, tenderly, forgetting all the people who have come to ask him questions, because that name calls up so much of the past. *"Tremolino."*

The Past. "It is frightfully misty now," he says. "But one doesn't forget twenty-seven years. All that gets merged into one solitary impression."

We stand on the bridge with him, curiously respectful, considering our trade. We let him sit in a corner, where he is just able to see, over the rail, the mass of lower New York. We ask for few autographs. We don't tell him much about the Statue of Liberty.

And Mr. Conrad moves up the bay, as if from the past into some strange future. A slate-blue haze blurs the skyscrapers rather than softens them. Mr. Conrad's eyes, those narrowed, seeing eyes, besieged by a thousand wrinkles from looking at the sea, find the prodigious crack in the skyline which is Broadway, and rest on it.

A ferry passes, all painted over with the romantic sea-faring words, "Bureau of Plant and Structures." Captain Bone of the *Tuscania* knows the poetry of the sea: "Three times round went our gallant Plant and Structures," he quotes.

"Life on the sea is altogether different now,"

says Mr. Conrad. He does not enlarge upon this. But we see him looking wonderingly at the pilot, who is standing in ordinary street clothes by the telegraph much as if he were looking out through the plate glass of a shoe store.

Not a sail is to be seen in the harbor. Steam, iron, landlubbers have invaded the ocean. A seaman's life is no longer something mysterious and unlearnable.

The windows of the Woolworth tower become singly visible.

Oh, for a wilderness of naked, shipless water! . . .

Judge Longstreet of Georgia

The red old hills of Georgia!
Oh, where upon the face
Of earth is freedom's spirit
More bright in any race?

Georgians have always been proud, but a hundred years ago their pride was singularly youthful and engaging, the pride of a man who has just cleared the first acre of his own land, the carefree boastfulness of a boy who has just learned to shoot straight with a new gun. Beside our ordered monotony the exuberant chaos of those days is something which we who did not have to live in it can afford to regret. We can smile at their gay crudities, their naïve arrogances, their solemn stalking of culture, like a bad hunter through a thick jungle, but their life had a flavor which we shall never quite taste again.

In Georgia a hundred years ago lived men who could by a single squirt of tobacco juice extinguish the fire in the fireplace. Two rooms, a hall and porch were comfort; two rooms and a couple of shed rooms more were luxury; if the porch across the front was two stories instead of one the owner was accused of "rivaling the ancient corrupt splen-

dors of Europe." Sand bags were used to keep the wind from under the front door, and dogs chased the pigs through the dining-room. Only a third of the white families owned slaves. Visitors often found themselves eating with Negro farm-hands at the table of their host. There was a typical frontier friendliness and freedom. Strangers were welcome, and extreme curiosity as to who they were and where they were going was an important part of the welcome. If a stranger came to a small Georgia town and refused for a whole day to give an account of himself the villagers might easily start a movement to ride him out of town, tarred and feathered, on a rail.

A cheerful, violent young democracy, much given to dueling and "gander-pulling" (a sport consisting of trying to pull the head off a greased gander while riding by at full gallop), and fights in which eyes were gouged out, and whiskey, and furious religion. A town of three thousand souls often had not a single school teacher, or, if it had, he was the kind who, after his pupils had "beaten, tied and smeared him with mud," surrendered and treated them to a gallon of whiskey. Of which liquid Georgia at one time consumed enough to give every man, woman and child one drink a day. Politics were no less important and were also taken undiluted. The state's first senator "declared her

a 'damn rascal,' said he bought her and sold her and would buy her and sell her again when he pleased."

Augustus Baldwin Longstreet entered this rough, raw, cheerful community at the weight of twenty pounds, and with a full set of teeth, we are told, leaving it eighty years later after having been, successively or simultaneously, a lawyer, politician, orator, judge, farmer, business man, patron of medical education, teacher, scholar, college president, author, editor, preacher, naturalist, carpenter, sportsman and flute player. He did none of these remarkably well, but all of them with something more than mediocrity; he was in no way great, but in every way a man who deserves the best that biography can give him. While Mr. Wade * can scarcely be said to have given him the best, he has written for us a fascinating, if at times awkward and cluttered, record of a very curious and lively character.

Longstreet's father was, among other things, an inventor, and dabbled in contrivances which under happier hands were later recognizable as sewing machines, steamboats and cotton gins. Yet he managed to remain fairly prosperous, and young Gus had a thousand acres to wander over and pur-

* *Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, a Study of the Development of Culture in the South*, by Judge Donald Wade (New York: The Macmillan Company). From this book all the material and quotations in this article have been taken.

sue his ambitions, which were at that time "to outrun, out-jump, out-shoot, throw down and whip any man in the district." When he was on the dunce-stool at the Hickory Gum Academy, which was often, he could always make the other children laugh, and his teacher thought him crazy. The wandering road of education led him through boarding school, where the pupils were summoned from their frame shacks to prayers by a horn blown at sunrise, through Yale, then under the influence of Dwight and the "Hartford wits," through law school at Litchfield, where there were cards and dancing "to an extent that one hardly expected among Puritans," where on fine days young gentlemen dressed up in pink gingham frock coats, and where John C. Calhoun "learned that 'whereas' was a good word with which to begin a poem."

Leaving behind him in the North the memory of a man who could tell funny stories about his own state for hours, and bringing with him much miscellaneous literary baggage, Longstreet dove at once into Georgia life and came up with both hands full. A few years after his admission to the bar he was made a judge, and spent many months riding on circuit. At the circuit towns, the Judge would stay at houses with blankets swung over the openings instead of doors. When he was not on circuit, life was no less various and interesting.

There was the possibility of growing silk in Georgia, which won from him an enthusiasm not to be inspired by cotton; there was money to be lent in small amounts ($37, or $31), and time spent in court, usually successfully, trying to collect it twofold; there was his captaincy in the Georgia militia; there was marriage (the clergyman received no fee), and "Patriotic Effusions," written under the pseudonym of Bob Short, for the public, and for more private consumption verse of which this surviving morsel is a fair example:

> Miss Dutton
> Has swallowed a button,
> And Mrs. Longstreet
> Has scalded her feet.

Lines which scarcely hint that the Judge was soon to find himself the state's most popular author, but such was the case.

Georgia was ripe for a chronicler; having recovered from the sense of inferiority, it had developed "a certain buoyant, healthful lack of sensitiveness that permitted it for a brief period to indulge in a degree of self-criticism that came near developing, by the process of feeding on its own output, a remarkable civilization." Yet of culture there was little, and of literature less. One of Georgia's editors thought he did not err in saying there were not

twenty Young Men's Literary Societies in the whole state, and its printed efforts ranged from the Georgia Analytical Repository and the Southern Ladies' Book to the original publication of the Washington Cherry Tree myth by Parson Weems. To such as these were soon added Longstreet's *Sentinel,* where in between corn-cure advertisements and editorial enquiries as to the possibility of hiring as a wetnurse one of a certain prominent citizen's "two Negro wives," began his famous series of Georgia Scenes.

These sketches, which helped to satisfy an immense curiosity about a singularly individual state, were almost immediately successful. They were hardly stories so much as hearty anecdotal descriptions, plus a little sound morality, of such familiar scenes as a Dance, a Horse Swap, a Fight, a Militia Company Drill. Usually long-winded, violent, sloppy, Longstreet's prose could rise to heights of eloquence as touching to us now as the furniture of the period, and for much the same reasons. Hear him describe "a lovely morning"—"December never ushered in one more lovely: like a sheet of snow the frost overspread the earth, as rich in beauty as ever met the gaze of mortal. Upon the western verge, in all his martial glory, stood Orion, his burnished epaulets and spangled sash with unusual brightness glowing. Capella glittered

brighter still, and Castor, Procyon and Arcturus . . ." Among his characters appear Mayor Loquax, Miss Mushy, the Messrs. Boozle and Noozle, and Madam Piggisqueaki. But others were actually named—though not drawn, Longstreet admits—after "important Georgia people."

Meanwhile the life from which he took these sketches continued abundant and miscellaneous, and himself always hearty, active, whether he was writing a parody of the whole of Hiawatha, or swearing out warrants against whoever he suspected of intending a duel, or gaining the gratitude of a wife who showed it by learning to write a hand exactly like his own, or selling her blacks for a "clever sum," or proclaiming the "duties of a candidate," which were "openly to avow his sentiments, particularly those which are averse to the prevailing opinion of those to whom he offers himself." In that young state where nature was wild, luxurious and friendly, and where man lived in pleasant mansions about whose grounds, in the words of a southern lady, "beautiful and unique hedges hide from the eye every unpleasant object," there was so much to do, with both man and nature. Man, for one thing, must be helped to conquer his own nature, and Longstreet advocated temperance, with an ardor which did not seem to him inconsistent with printing illustrated advertise-

ments of whiskey stills in his newspaper. The challenge (which appeared under his own nom de plume of Bob Short): How long would this picture continue to adorn his columns—he answered characteristically: "Just as long as it pays the printer's tariff. Bob will please notice that the still in our newspaper is a very small one, just fit for rose water and peppermint—not whiskey."

But in those days whiskey had only just begun to be a serious subject. The Methodists, who took it seriously enough, were troubled by honest converts who could not promise to drink less than a quart a day. Yet in spite of the state's liquor consumption the Methodists were numerous. Longstreet now found himself turning in their direction: after a fortnight's study, he says, "All my doubts vanished, and I became a thorough believer in Christianity." A rather noisy, quarrelsome Christianity, in which perhaps the strongest emotion was the mutual hatred of Baptists and Methodists; an intense, tawdry, usually sincere flood of revivals, in which Longstreet was not the least sincere man nor the most intense. But Methodism had other sides, with an appeal not lost on him; there were conferences, speeches, old friends, fried chicken, feather beds. "For breakfast in those times"—Mr. Wade is quoting from one Simms—"they had hominy, waffles, ricecakes and fritters, with corresponding

variety of meats—a dish of broiled partridges, a steak of venison and a dish of boiled eggs." Which may explain, and must have made easier of obedience, the familiar Methodist exhortation of those days—"Groan, brother, groan."

In spite of failing an examination in English grammar Longstreet was admitted to the Methodist ministry. He joined the band who went about holding revivals in such towns as Washington—a town which those of 1827 knew for its "wealth, hospitality, refinement, skepticism and wickedness." He deplored the inroads of the waltz; he made sermons in legal style, full of the citation of authorities; his familiar "I'm so glad, my dear sir, how do you feel?" was heard by many a youthful convert. His opinion on religious matters, by no means consistent or profound, varied according to whether his tolerance or his vivacity held the upper hand. Of the latter we instance a classic outburst which the fundamentalists of today may in vain well envy.

> All science which puts God out of the world [he says] or that makes Him the most inactive, inefficient being in all his vast dominion, by teaching that He wound up the machinery of the universe a hundred thousand years ago, set it going, and then seated Himself to look idly on its workings through eternity; all science which teaches that He made but one thing at first, a something like a thin cloud or mist, or white smoke, heated first very hot, and set it to rolling and flinging off hard, round ponderous

worlds . . . all science which teaches that one of these mist-made worlds is cooled down to three-fourths water and one-fourth land, and that the water made the fishes, and the land made the bipeds and quadrupeds; all science which teaches that God has given no laws to man; that the Bible is a lie, and Jesus Christ an impostor and a liar: Get the ear of the yet uncorrupted, if you can, proclaim to them, and prove to them that all such teachings lead to incalculable misery on earth and immense agony in hell.

Longstreet's career as a minister gradually merged into that of college president. In one small college after another, in Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and his "dear old South Carolina," he pacified unruly students who paid fifty dollars a year for rent, fuel and tuition, who bought whiskey from passing cotton trains, beat tin pans under his window, rode furiously across the campus at midnight and occasionally threw rocks at him. He taught them Mental and Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric, Evidences of Christianity, Logic and Political Economy, and held that the perfect college president was one "whose textbook in morals is the Bible, and whose lessons in physics all begin and end with its author." There were many interruptions, many trips about the country to small towns where young girls saved pages in their albums for him to fill, many hours spent on his farm examining new plowing contrivances invented by some Methodist preacher, to the value of which he loved writing

magnificent testimonials. He loved to teach, too, but his students remembered his flute-playing better than his teaching. Altogether it was "an almost phantasmal, idyllic life."

A life soon to be shadowed, broken and scattered forever into memories and ashes. The war was coming on faster than any of them knew. Longstreet's point of view must have been that of many Southerners of his generation. "If a white person was cruel or inconsiderate to Negroes," Mr. Wade remarks, "he would probably burn in hell for it, but there must be no thought of a Negro's present retaliation." Longstreet would take care that he sold his slaves to a kind and pious master. "Abolition among churchmen" he declared to be "a mania, a fanatical monster, an insatiable Polyphemus, which will tear to pieces and devour everything sacred and all political and religious institutions"; and John Brown was "a ruthless monster, a night prowler, an alarmist of sleeping women and children, a vagrant husband, an unnatural father, a complotter with aliens against his countrymen, a robber, a traitor, a murderer, a shocking incarnation of all that is shocking in human nature and brazen in sin."

But when war actually threatened, the old man was in a very different mood: "Woe to the people who bring on such conflict but from dire necessity!"

he lamented. "Is it necessary? No, no, no! It is not only bootless, desperate, but wholly unnecessary. . . . This never will end in war if the South will be prudent, and we must let no southern state begin it." Such words availed nothing. His students left in a body, and he himself went to the train to bid them "a pleasant farewell and godspeed." The moment war seemed inevitable, Longstreet was heart and soul for it. He went to General Lee with a scheme in which he, Longstreet, and six of his students, all disguised as Negroes, were to sail away in a small boat and leave a charge of dynamite on every vessel of the Yankee fleet lying off Carolina. Lee was kind, but not encouraging, and Longstreet soon accepted the milder service of Chaplain to the Georgia militia.

The Federals advanced, taking Oxford, burning his precious forty years' accumulation of papers and correspondence, forcing the old man to flee before them, which he did in a fine carriage, carrying with him the curtains from the parlor windows—curtains which President Buchanan had once refused as too costly for the White House. Soon the war was over, and in the midst of melancholy ruins and ashes and hopes dead never to be reborn, old Judge Longstreet seemed a gentle phœnix risen for a last brief flight. Magazines once more asked him to contribute; there was always euchre, and

stories of the Indians to tell, and his glass flute which children loved to see taken apart and put together again. He would sit writing at a long table before the fireplace, and if one of his grandchildren came in to sit silently and watch him, when he stooped over the fire to light his pipe he never failed to bump his head on the mantelpiece, as if accidentally, for her amusement.

Now in this mellowed November he wrote his wife's epitaph, and his own. "He sleeps," so it goes, "by the side of his wife, of whom he never thought himself worthy, and who never thought herself worthy of him. . . . Death was a kind visitor to them both." He outlived her two years. One summer night they found him lying on a bench, looking up at the sky, while he counted the cries of a whippoorwill. In a few days he was gone from the world, from the South, his dear South, now so ruined, saddened, leaving behind him property worth about fifty thousand dollars.

Bipedologically Speaking

First Bipedologist. And like other local groups they have a tendency to converge upon civic issues.

Second Bipedologist. My last Ph.D. thesis was precisely on that subject.

B. 1. I wish you'd send me a copy. Recently I've been at some pains to inquire into the question, How far do regional associations deny themselves, quite unnecessarily, contact with functional organization?

B. 2. I'll gladly furnish you with a copy. Sociology, particularly in Texas, has scarcely reached any point of departure as radical as that.

B. 1. I concur. A good illustration can be taken from the activities, coöperative or otherwise, of the Bushelmen. These highly skilled artisans, it seems, flourish without the slightest trace of cognitive virulence. It only goes to prove the original commonplace, nihil humanum puto.

B. 2. Which proves that Inksey was right after all.

B. 1. And how right he was. Those superbly correlative graphs! By candlelight in my graduate student days, I used to read between their lines.

Curve upon curve, their social advertence dazzled me beyond verbal concept.

B. 2. The verbalists have had their day. I used to be a verbalist but after one term under Hervey Sloper I gave it all up.

B. 1. Sloper, the greatest faminologist of our century. I well remember his mot that the possession of cake is not necessarily coincident with its assimilation. A big, a very big man. Saline of the cosmos. Yet not wholly without faults. His theory of preliminary intensification is now quite exploded.

B. 2. For many weeks I was his assistant in the predetermination of the causes of fluency in the District of Columbia. Also he was an ardent logologist. I respect him for it.

B. 1. Only another instance of senescent tropism. But he was the first man to recognize and classify pro rata, stigmata and data. All the cooperative elements in his psychology were united to that end. But I think we stray from the point. To borrow a figure, the group metabolism of the group is readily seen in rural communities. According to Rimple's law of excess rurality, the sum of the relative tendencies equals the coefficient of X, plus 2. For X in this case we may safely substitute any well-authenticated phenomena of recent growth. Or, if you'll pardon mixed metaphors, the

greater the area under observation the greater the aggregate agrarianism. Do I make myself plain?

B. 2. I'd be obliged for a more specific example.

B. 1. Well, since you insist, I'll put it in the crudest possible terms. It seems there was once an Irishman named Pat.

B. 2. Not Pat, the well-known Keltic colleague of Mike?

B. 1. The same. I had occasion to interview Pat while engaged in a peculiarly delicate piece of case-history. Now case-histories, as you know, are the most dangerous of all history. Indeed no history is without its case, and vice versa. It happened that our Center leaned towards correctional measures. The Kelt apparently suffered from bibitive neurasthenia, whether fortuitously or otherwise. For long I hesitated, since, quite between ourselves, I have always had a certain sense of friction with the generality of mankind. I sought out his address, and approached a rough, burly fellow, somewhat hirsute, not a little minatory.

B. 2. The Keltic strain, as Wimmer cogently suggests, must be reckoned with.

B. 1. Wimmer or no Wimmer, I suggested to the fellow that his social-behavior-pattern needed attention, and that his extempore intemperance would result, according to the best of my limited statistics, in some degree of laxity in the minutiæ

of conduct. His reply was, as you would expect, a familiar anti-social-behavior-pattern. His exact words were—I wrote them down immediately—Get the h-e-l-l out of here. That was it—h-e-l-l.

B. 2. I'm afraid I don't understand.

B. 1. I don't wonder. I think I've had vastly more experience in folk-ways than you. Suffice it to say that he let fly a positive mine of folk-lore. I also detected in his reflex utterance the presence of numerous fictional elements. He wound up by obscure and hasty references to some degree of canine filiality on my part.

B. 2. The Keltic races have long been prone to filiality. A footnote on page 262 of the last Journal is illuminating on that point.

B. 1. This was only in illustration of my thesis . . .

B. 2. My theses are always Ph.D.

B. 1. Surely folk-anger, folk-jest, folk-conation, like folk-song and folk-jargon, are implicit in the folk itself and are not brought out or otherwise deleted by incompetent environmental influences.

B. 2. I wish we could substitute environmental influences instead of the folk in every state of the Union.

B. 1. Liberal though I am, I agree with you. And above all I deplore the irruption of certain non-assimilable elements into our national com-

munity. The Slavanese, the Greebanians and the Palestovaks, to mention only a few, are deficient in the auditive, adumbrative and applaudative characteristics so vital to our state-plasm.

B. 2. I had occasion to lecture recently on the influx of peoples of Esperantist nationality. They are, in the majority, Nordics, small, but perfectly formed.

B. 1. I was under the impression that they were Uro-Alpines, and decisively megalo-cephalic.

B. 2. On the contrary, as you will see from the following fragment of one of their nomadic folk-songs or tribe-sagas, which I noticed in a recent pamphlet by Noodling, and learned by heart. The tune, if any, I forget.

> Tsöörti deiz häw septembör,
> Eipril, dzhuun änd nowembör,
> Eksept in lïip-jiir, hwen dsey oal
> Häw twenti nain oar none at all.

B. 1. Admirable! The essence of folk! Even old Gabney could not have denied this authentic voice of latent mammalianism. What *Zeitwissenschaft,* as we used to say in "Soc" 12!

B. 2. A coming race, I am sure. One of them has already taken a degree. A blue-eyed, black-haired individual, strangely enough.

B. 1. Wouldn't Mendel be surprised!

B. 2. I am afraid that Mendel, great recessivist that he was, would indeed be surprised. Think of all those propulsive hopes stranded on the shores of selective inadmissibility.

B. 1. It's all very dubious matter anyhow.

All Abroad!

April 30.—At last I am going abroad! My affairs are in excellent state, many of my friends are going also, and the exchange is very favorable. I have never taken a decision so suddenly. There was Paul coming out of the bank with a letter of credit. "My boat leaves Saturday," he remarked. "Why not come too?" "But why not, after all?" I replied, and the thing was done. My passport should be ready tomorrow. I have just bought some foreign money, but very little, as the exchange is feverish, uncertain.

May 6.—Truly it would have been difficult to stay behind. On every hand I hear people talking of their plans. The whole town will be abroad this summer. It's an epidemic.

May 7.—Last night we all met at Paul's, and discussed the universal longing for foreign travel. What is it about that distant place which we so love? Is it the beauty, the strange faces, the wines, the sunlight? Some go simply for change; others are amateurs of churches. Some go because others go, and others go for no reason at all. We did not arrive at any conclusion, though we agreed in pity-

ing those who have been transplanted abroad and live there permanently, rootless. We promised to meet, and noted the addresses of foreign banks.

May 8.—Land is fading out of sight. I cannot believe it, but Paul and I are really on our way to America. Greedily we pore over the guide-books. That vast, that ancient land, will soon be ours to explore A radiogram announces that the exchange has fallen again: eight dollars to the franc. Paul assures me that if this continues, we shall get as far as Omaha, about which we have always heard so much.

May 9.—We are traveling student third. Poor, but congenial company, like ourselves. We mingle with students and professors from Heidelberg, Liverpool, Asnières, Pinsk. Many have been over before, and give us excellent tips. It appears that the great falls of Niagara are much overrated, and that the chic place to spend the summer is Alabama. We shall see.

May 10.—The dean of the school of languages at Berlitz am Main tells us that America is by no means monolingual, the richest variations being found in the South. This excites Paul, who is fond of dialects. There is a certain uneasiness on board owing to the exchange: seven dollars to the franc. A situation, however, which cannot fail to improve.

May 17.—We have arrived. Such a lot of non-

sense about customs and passports. My English is worth nothing to me. Truly these American petty officials are the rudest in the world, as I was led to expect. But they are not above taking a little tip. Our taxi to the Waldorf-Astoria, where we took several charming little rooms, was but ninety centimes. At noon the exchange sank to eleven to the franc, and we hurried to avail ourselves of this good fortune at the bank of J. P. Morgan and Company, where we found dozens of acquaintances on the same errand.

May 25.—It is now a week we have been in New York, and truly it is the most delightful city. I have never seen so many of my friends in one place before. Every evening we dine at ridiculously cheap little restaurants and then make the rounds of the gay places, often not returning to the hotel until four in the morning. We have discovered a number of most picturesque and lively Negro cabarets. By day, what was left of it, Paul and I would wander on the left bank (known to the natives as Brooklyn), where we unearthed several small restaurants frequented only by American taxi drivers, famous for their fastidious palates. A number of excellent serious plays are running now, but we think they would be too difficult to understand. We did visit a celebrated old church, the name of which I have forgotten, and the Municipal

Museum of Art, but we thought our own art, already sufficiently familiar to us, was over-represented. Paul picked up a beautiful old hook rug for a hundred dollars—seven francs fifty—!

May 26.—We must begin our travels. Our sojourn in New York has cost a little more than we allowed for. And on every hand friends are urging us to go with them, possibly motoring, or sharing a villa on the coast for two or three weeks. Others, returning from hill and cathedral towns, from the interior and the wilder industrial districts, fill us with curiosity. One friend in particular was exuberant in praise of the State House at Columbus (in Ohio), which he claims to be his original discovery.

June 2.—We resisted this, as well as the temptation to go house-boating in Arkansas, and after cashing several hundred francs (the exchange being momentarily sixteen to one), struck off on donkeys through New Jersey. The old farmhouses were enchanting, the weather superb, but the insects were many and the local customs not as beautiful as we had expected.

June 3.—We have sold the donkeys, in the old-world market town of Trenton, and have hired an automobile, which seems to be the prevailing native method of locomotion, since we do not wish to be too conspicuous. We are in the heart of America,

and our doubtless foreign speech and dress excite some remark.

June 6.—We are in the lower provinces of Wisconsin. We had some difficulty at the border, owing to language, passports and the strained relations between the Eastern and Western governments. The country is very lovely, but rather flat. We stop now and then to inspect an old church for its far-famed stained glass, and note that the inhabitants live in round tower-like edifices known as silos. The natives are reticent, suspicious and fair-haired. In all probability Indians, as their speech, which we cannot understand, and the names of their villages (Kenosha, Wotwogee, Waukesha) would indicate. At Waukesha we bought some more dollars, at 17½ to one.

June 8.—So this is Pittsburgh! Flanked by hills, looming through a pall of smoke, the old mediævalesque fortress impresses us. We visit the factories of the Standard Sanitary Plumbing Company. The finest product of America, whose porcelain curves have made her famous the world over. Paul is very happy. He has bought a complete bathroom set, for a hundred and forty-six francs.

June 10.—A word as to American inns. The smaller they are, such as the statlers (to be found in nearly every village), the better is the food. A

most typical and amazing game is played in these hostelries nearly every night. It is called "paging." A young factotum is hired, by the call or by the hour, to shout a name through the corridors. Paul and I had fun for a whole evening "paging" famous generals and academicians. The mispronunciations were highly diverting, and the total cost, if I remember, less than forty centimes.

June 12.—After all, New York is best. We have missed our friends very much, and find them all here again. We decide not to live on the left bank, though it is cheaper.

June 13.—Today is one of the Saints' days. The police are parading up the street. It is pleasant to catch glimpses of the more intimate life and habits of a foreign people.

July 13.—Our trip is over. Tomorrow we sail, full of impressions. Obviously it is a great country, replete with memories, yet I am not sure we have seen the best of it. Paul and I have been busy enough; we have visited eighty-three old churches, nineteen old farmhouses, a world-famous factory, three canals, eight breweries, sixty suspension bridges and seventy-five beautiful penal institutions dating all the way back to early times. We have seen countless pictures, some of the most beautiful of which were on the covers of magazines. We are taking with us a large collection of these

rare magazines. Some of them will make exquisite lampshades. I have picked up some handsome antiques. One treasure I particularly prize. It is a very old Stillson wrench, in perfect condition, which I bought in Altoona (near Pennsylvania) for only twenty-eight dollars. It will make a unique paper weight. Last night we gave a farewell party, beginning at Childs' and ending at the Club Alabam.

Paul and I estimate that our trip, exclusive of steamship fares, has cost us less than thirty-five thousand, three hundred dollars, or not quite nineteen francs a day apiece.

THE YOUNG LADY. Well, I must say I enjoyed that.* Driver, go up Fifth Avenue.

THE BROKER. It was colorful.

MR. MACMORON. How destructive Shaw is of shams. How he hates pretense and bigotry.

THE STRANGER. How incurably romantic he is.

THE LADY WHO ONCE MET G. B. S. AT A DINNER PARTY. I wish Mr. Shaw could have seen it tonight. He'd have liked it.

THE GOSSIP. I hear he's writing a new play.

THE CRITIC. This is a queer insulated thing, this *Devil's Disciple*. Very near to us, about something well known and in our recent past, yet how little is it historical. You don't feel that Saratoga is just around the corner. The play is as much of a desert island as a musical comedy. Now in *Androcles* what vistas there were leading into the great dark world. A play of starting points. While this is a play of arrivals.

THE STRANGER. As soon as you begin to make characters who are all villains or heroes, you cut

* *The Devil's Disciple*, a melodrama by George Bernard Shaw. Presented by the Theatre Guild. Directed by Philip Moeller. Settings by Lee Simonson. At the Garrick Theatre, April 23, 1923.

yourself off from the world. I'm sure this is a favorite of Shaw's. All villains and heroes. He'd much rather, at bottom, simplify the world than see it as the complicated thing it is.

Mr. MacMoron. But has any one ever pointed out the sheer brilliance of Shaw?

The Lady Who Once, *etc.* I told Mr. Shaw he was the cleverest man I'd ever read.

The Young Lady. The court martial scene was a scream.

The Gossip. I hear Morris Gest is going to write a book about the theater and dedicate it to Max Reinhardt.

The Critic. The point is, how does this play correspond with reality? What is the reality Shaw has in mind?

The Stranger. At bottom, the reality of the Lump in the Throat. One hundred percent sacrifice moves Shaw unspeakably. And he translates this whole-hearted unquestioning bravery, this finest flower of the human spirit, into something that moves us too, unspeakably. I mean we have no words for it. Where Dick Dudgeon lets the soldiers take him away. . . .

The Young Lady. Oh, that gave me *such* a feeling! How splendid of him!

The Broker. It was a fine thing to do.

The Lady Who Once, *etc.* I'm sure Mr. Shaw

has sacrificed a great deal himself. Those eyes of his. . . .

Mr. MacMoron. Whenever I see or hear of sacrifice, I have a lump in my throat. Now, for instance—I have a sister who is a trained nurse. . . .

The Critic. In other words, this is high romance. Romance besieged, cut off, isolated. Melodromance. And it ought to be played as such, with terrific speed, cruelty, hardness, light-heartedness, and cynicism. . . .

The Young Lady. Do you think Shaw is cynical?

The Actor. I agree with you. The performance was made up of little pieces and kept stopping all the time. Now the first act—wasn't it slow?

The Critic. That was the fault of the direction. Speaking of directors, did you read what Kenneth Macgowan . . .

The Gossip. I hear Kenneth is writing a new book. It's to be called *The Theater of the Spring of 1927*.

The Critic. Leaving the direction aside, we can say of this as we can of nearly all Theatre Guild productions, that it was a fine thing to the eye. . . .

The Musician. And terrible to the ear. Just try blindfolding yourself and sitting through *The Devil's Disciple*. It's mostly eye.

THE BROKER. It was colorful.

THE LADY WHO, *etc.* Mr. Shaw has a red beard.

THE ARTIST. Pleasant, yes. Bully costumes. The sets finely composed as to color. I liked the blue and white severity of the Waiting Room scene particularly. But on the stage objects of three dimensions have a way of sticking out and spoiling by unexpected lines a fine composition of color. Take the first act. Too many objects. Though finely related to the whole in color, how they jut out. And the last act was miscellaneous.

THE ACTOR. What a poor mob at the gate. Not angry, but maudlin; not Yankee rebels, but half-wits.

MR. MACMORON. The Yankee rebel forefathers were highly intelligent.

THE YOUNG LADY. Wasn't Basil Sydney splendid! He's one of the handsomest men!

THE ACTOR. And one of the worst actors.

THE GOSSIP. They say he's going to play Hamlet.

THE YOUNG LADY. I could fall in love with him.

THE LADY WHO, *etc.* Mr. Shaw has such eyes! If he wanted to I know he could be a heart-breaker. . . .

THE ACTOR. Basil Sydney's a sponge squeezer. He'll squeeze a line until it's dry of meaning, and then some. Give him twenty words and he'll use

twenty face muscles and four kinds of breathing, and he'll slant up his eyebrows meaningfully, and pretend to chew gum, and shuffle his mouth and lips and redeal them. . . .

THE BROKER. He ought to be made to play poker and not change his face for seven hours.

THE CRITIC. He has a kind of condescendingly soothing insistence that soon becomes unbearable.

THE MUSICIAN. All the tones of his voice seem in the same key of self-satisfied assurance.

THE YOUNG LADY. I'd marry him tomorrow.

THE STRANGER. That's the praise he, or any one else, would most like to hear.

THE CRITIC. To continue. Miss Lotus Robb seemed . . .

THE YOUNG LADY. She's a dear.

THE GOSSIP. I hear she's going to play Juliet.

THE ACTOR. Judith Anderson is a hard part. There she is planted in the court martial scene, which is pure joyous verbal dueling and slap-stick, and all the time she is an intensely tragic figure.

THE ARTIST. Perhaps she ought to sit with her back to the audience.

THE STRANGER. A very fine bit she does when Anderson finds her fainted on the floor.

THE CRITIC. A strain of poignant life, like music.

THE ACTOR. That change from half-conscious

puzzlement to terror and remembrance is not easy, and admirably done. One of the best bits of acting in the whole play.

THE STRANGER. The change to a new mood is good, but the reality of the new mood is not maintained.

THE YOUNG LADY. Don't you people ever like *anything?*

THE ACTOR. We all find Mr. Moffat Johnston good.

THE GOSSIP. I hear he is going to play Hamlet.

THE CRITIC. He is warm, natural, sympathetic.

THE STRANGER. He's too much the same in every play.

THE YOUNG LADY. I felt so sorry for Anderson's poor wife. Imagine—a man so *much* older!

THE GOSSIP. Which is older, Gest or Reinhardt? Reinhardt is writing a book on the American theater. It will be dedicated to Morris Gest. He has been to see *Kiki.*

THE LADY WHO ONCE, *etc.* I am sure Roland Young was not Mr. Shaw's idea of General Burgoyne.

THE YOUNG LADY. Oh, do you think so? I thought he was so funny and dry; so *amusing.*

THE GOSSIP. I hear he's going to play Hamlet.

THE YOUNG LADY. You're thinking of *Rollo's Wild Oat.*

THE ACTOR. Rollo, *Anything Might Happen,* General Burgoyne. The same delightful Roland Young, but the *same.* Now, his voice is more monotonous than Sydney's, but he knows just how to use it. Not a wide range, but within his special talent an admirable economy of sound, emphasis, gesture. He squeezed every drop of humor out of the juicy lines, but, unlike Sydney, he didn't seem to be squeezing.

THE CRITIC. He is secure, but inelastic. His art, if not transcendent, is at his command.

THE STRANGER. Anybody who didn't score high with those lines ought to be shot. Of course he seems good.

MR. MACMORON. Shaw is well known for his biting humor.

THE GOSSIP. I hear that Reinhardt is going to have the Hippodrome. Or maybe Madison Square Garden.

THE STRANGER. Of course Roland Young's conception of General Burgoyne was all wrong. Or rather the century he put it in was all wrong. Young is too modern. Burgoyne was, with all his flippancy, much more impressive. He was acid rather than salty, and subdued his officers by the hint of a cold savagery held in reserve. And his eyes, says Shaw, "were large, brilliant, apprehensive. . . ."

THE LADY WHO, *etc.* I'm sure that's the way Mr. Shaw thought of him.

THE STRANGER. And we can't give Roland Young new eyes. Nor fifty pounds more weight. Nor a post-port-wine richness and fastidiousness of bearing.

THE GOSSIP. I hear that Reinhardt has leased Croton Reservoir for the gondola scene from the *Merchant of Venice.*

THE BROKER. It's a fine location.

THE CRITIC. There's something that worries me about Miss Beverly Sitgreaves as Mrs. Dudgeon. A fine command, but a too heavy insistence.

THE ACTOR. She impresses one, and that's good; but she often impresses one when she should not be making any impression at all.

THE CRITIC. She tends toward the imperialistic. She is a competent enough actress to get more of your attention than her lines deserve.

THE YOUNG LADY. You are *so* critical! But I like to hear you talk. It must be fine to have a means of self-expression.

THE LADY WHO, *etc.* I wish Mr. Shaw could be here now.

THE CRITIC. As for the others, the smaller parts . . .

THE ACTOR. Now there's one thing I like about you. I don't as a rule understand what you're talk-

ing about, but you do notice the smaller parts.

THE CRITIC. Miss Bryan Allen as Essie was disarming and authentic. Mr. Hamer as Christie did well with his body, and badly with his voice. The Dudgeon uncles (Messrs. Russell and Cecil) were heavy exaggerations where salty caricatures were wanted. Mr. Cecil later reappeared as the Sergeant, in which part he was unrecognizable, and adequate.

THE ACTOR. I see what you're driving at.

THE STRANGER. I don't. You have fallen into jargon. It's nearly, but not quite, comprehensible. Still, I couldn't do any better. Some sort of verbal shorthand is necessary. All honor to the players of small parts. May they never be spoilt by becoming stars.

THE YOUNG LADY. An actor's life must be awfully interesting.

THE BROKER. They never get any exercise.

THE GOSSIP. I hear Max Reinhardt is going to do a dramatization of the Telephone Directory.

THE MUSICIAN. None of you people see that the whole thing's all wrong. If a symphony were played as badly as most plays—and this one—are acted, it would be hissed off the stage. This is all separate, unrelated notes. It needs a conductor. The tempo is the same, rigid, pedestrian same, throughout. Even were the acting left, in detail,

as we saw it tonight, a lot could be done by having an intelligent person with a baton down in front speeding things up here, slowing them down there. But as it is now it's in the darkness of the pre-rehearsal era.

THE ACTOR. Yes, it's true we actors seldom get out of the rehearsal stage. It's not entirely our fault. It's financial.

THE GOSSIP. I hear the Theatre Guild Bond drive was oversubscribed: $542,800. The next step, I hear, is to call in the Otis Elevator Company, and devise machinery that will rock the stage back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, so that the audience will think it's at sea.

THE YOUNG LADY. That would be *much* too realistic!

THE LADY WHO, *etc.* Mr. Shaw told me he had crossed the Channel 184 times.

THE CRITIC. Realism. That's the blight of the stage. We have much to learn from life, it is true, but more, at the present time, to learn from the experiments of the expressionists—or the essentialists. Now we want to get away from peep-hole realism, and bore through to the essentials, to the inner truth. . . .

THE STRANGER. Northern and Southern Dakota, upper and lower berth, inner and outer truth. Renascence, Quintessence, Truthessence, Senes-

cence. Break the shell, boys. Bury all the old words, and the new ones under them.

THE YOUNG LADY. Mr. Critic, if I were an actress, what would you say about *me?*

DR. FRANK CRANE *(suddenly, from under the seat).* I take my hat off to Actor Sydney and Author Shaw.

ALL *(shouting).* Say! This taxi holds only nine. *(They throw him out.)*

THE BROKER. He's an optimist.

THE CRITIC. Shaw, to continue, is not really true to any reality except his own, nor does he choose the just, the inevitable mold, the unimprovable-upon vehicle. . . .

THE YOUNG LADY. But it's good fun.

THE STRANGER. And it makes you think, here and there.

THE CRITIC. . . . for his inner, his sub-selfian, sub-Shavian mood. He does not articulate; he connects, irrefragably, sense with sound. . . . What we want is beauty revealed, perceived, translated. What we want are not representational actors, but non-representational actors. The Theater needs non-proportional representationalism. . . . It must find, behind the outer rind, the inner mind. . . .

EVERYBODY ELSE. Driver! *Stop!* Here's where I get off!

"Bitter Bierce" *

"You may wander for years," said Arnold Bennett, speaking of underground reputations, "and never meet anybody who has heard of Ambrose Bierce; and then you may hear some erudite student whisper in an awed voice: 'Ambrose Bierce is the greatest living prose writer.'" Bierce himself was well aware of this, and I think his own lines on the subject are nearer the truth:

> My, how my fame rings out in every zone—
> A thousand critics shouting, He's Unknown.

The critics shouted—a few are still shouting—but did anybody else? He never was popular, and doubtless he never will be. There will always be some to think him our greatest prose writer, and others, like Franklin K. Lane, to dismiss him as "a hideous monster, so like the mixture of dragon, lizard, bat and snake as to be unnamable," but the vast majority will continue, as now, never to have read a line of him, not even to know his name.

This is not sheer inability on the part of the populace to recognize a genius. There must be

* *In the Midst of Life*, by Ambrose Bierce. New York, A. and C. Boni.

something more. Bierce was apparently a most attractive personality, who could make friends incapable of forgetting or not loving that unfathomable, deep-lined face, that great head, sensitive but invulnerable, lined and deepened into a native nobility like some king of the peasants. He could write to these friends, and to strangers as well, diffident, considerate, and charming letters, in which was combined gentleness of feeling with a square-cut simplicity of language, but whatever else he wrote, no matter how powerful, how striking, how carved from deep and simple quarries of speech, was somehow profoundly unattractive. It was tainted, subtly poisoned by the ever-present idea of death, a phenomenon which repelled him and drew him to itself with fascinated horror. He never accepted death as a mere terminal; death was not only an end, but an end in itself, a thing never solved, never absent, a mouthful of life from which no amount of chewing could ever expel its sweet and bitter taste.

There seems to have been no gayety in Bierce. He had wit, a savage macabre humor which made him feared and famous in the early newspaper days on the coast. In the columns of little California sheets he flayed weekly, in heavily venomous and brilliant verses, the local criminals and politicians. His favorite method was to imagine his victim in

hell, and turn him over and over upon red-hot couplets—

> Baruch and Waterman upon their grills
> In Hades lay . . .

The roasting was often wickedly neat and malicious, but how the black and red threads, fire and death, persisted, until one turned away from this sadism in horror. These fiendish little poems were signed by aliases characteristic of his fancy, gnarled, acid, spider-like names, painfully the result of imagination: Arbely C. Strunk, Jamrock Holobom, Apuleius M. Gokul, Pobeter Dunk, Gassalasca Jape.

These satirical stingers are lively reading even now, when all the Californians upon whom they were impaled are quite forgotten. For Bierce was a very gifted man, and imparted heat to everything he wrote. The best example of his gift for caustic, cynical epigram is the *Devil's Dictionary,* a collection of tacks on the seat of the world's chair from which the following are good but not unexcelled examples:

AGITATOR—A statesman who shakes the fruit-trees of his neighbors—to dislodge the worms.

CONSERVATIVE—A statesman who is enamored of existing evils, as distinguished from the Liberal, who wishes to replace them with others.

APPLAUSE—The echo of a platitude.

But Bierce's claim to fame rests chiefly upon his stories of war. He fought in the Civil War himself, and knew what he was talking about. In fact, he knew a little too well what he was talking about. Horror and death start from these pages and stifle us as if from the note-book of an eyewitness whose purpose in taking down the last details of the scenes about him was eventually to horrify a reader. Realism? No, curiously enough; these stories of war, though they seize attention as in a trap, are utterly unreal when we think of Tolstoy's Sebastopol. Much of Bierce's detail is poignantly lifelike, but he rolled and twisted these details up into a creature of his own death-ridden, fate-tortured imagination. The cruelty and irony of the war seem to have warped his sense of the real; nothing happens casually, spontaneously, irrelevantly; all is subordinate to that final twist or trick in which we discover that the soldier shot his own father as part of his duty, that Peyton Farquhar was being hanged all the time, that the child's own home was destroyed, that the dead sniper was found by his own brother. Under his unrelaxed grip the story moves tensely, unnaturally to an end predetermined with irony, bitterness and clenched teeth. This craftsman's inexorable chisel cuts dead true to pattern, so that no living tree seems to have been the father of this rigid piece of wood. Once in a while the tight grip

loosens a little, and we have that noble, solid, almost poetic last ride on the white horse into the enemy's lines.

Bierce's stories belong to a species which, thanks to the influence of Chekhov, Katherine Mansfield and many others, who adapt life rather than twist it to their creative ends, is far less popular than it was. It is the kind of story which, from the very beginning, is built up and hammered together for the sake of the final twist, the dramatic or melodramatic dénouement which in Bierce's case was often as violent as the kick of a mule in the reader's face. Once or twice, as in the story of Peyton Farquhar's hanging, this final trick is handled with superb skill and suspense, but in story after story such decapitation of the reader's attention on the last page becomes tiresome. This is very discouraging in view of Bierce's accurate eye and skillful hand in the piling up of natural detail toward his unnatural and artificial end. After many pages in which we hear real bits of life and catch glimpses of real people, the closet door opens with a crash and out upon the floor falls a rattling skeleton. We are jarred, but we somehow suspected this would happen, for though the skeleton is concealed until the end, Bierce had it so much in mind, and was saving it up so eagerly that he could not keep it from rattling faintly from the beginning of the

story. It was his obsession, this constant sense of death, it was his honey and his poison, and it was one of the sardonic, self-destructive twists in the mind of a man who was extraordinarily gifted, and who might, one feels, have been great.

"The New Spoon River" *

This son and heir of the old *Spoon River Anthology* arrives rather disquietingly dressed up in its father's clothes, and, strongly recommended by its heredity, flaunts a jacket which reminds us that Mr. Masters' first parade of skeletons was at the time thought to be "the best living interpretation of America," "a miracle of veracious characterization," with the "divine thrill," the "authentic inspiration," the "white flame of beauty," and a "place among the masterpieces."

Ten years have passed, and while the *Anthology* was certainly a landmark in American literature—we won't tell you the total number of landmarks—it was a long way from being a thrilling miracle of authentic beauty. Original—yes, and sincere, and "authentic," and real in a veracious, unsubtle, solid way, but also how utterly charmless it was, and yeastless, how much more like acid it burned into us than like fire.

What we remember of the *Anthology* is that impression of having been introduced to a small town and its small houses and small inhabitants by a

* *The New Spoon River*, by Edgar Lee Masters. New York, Boni and Liveright.

guide who showed us, with merciless irony, through all the back yards and back alleys, past all the underestimated lives hidden within poor exteriors, and the mean souls hiding behind a brave façade. We remember the expedition, and its desperately honest, saltless aftertaste, but we don't remember any of the individuals. Their faces, less distinct than the gossip, detective work and idealistic generalizations in which they swam, have long since disappeared. The talk about "a miracle of veracious characterization" was nonsense. There was no gallery of characters. There were no characters, and what we mistook for such were case histories in the clinic of life's hospital, with Mr. Masters as surgeon rather than artist.

Existence in Spoon River has not ceased, and Mr. Masters has continued to record it. The place has changed a good deal since 1914; it has grown; it employs labor, amasses capital, parks automobiles, listens to the radio; the war has come and gone, foreign names and faces are mixed with native. On the surface it has changed, and in this new gallery private views of public lives are added to the public exposure of private lives which began in the old gallery, but from one gallery we move imperceptibly into the other, and since Mr. Masters is much the same as before, at bottom Spoon River is not so very different either. For Mr. Masters'

ideas and feelings about life in general were more important to him, whether he was aware of it or not, than his portraits, and blurred and overshadowed them. In the new *Anthology* his ideas and feelings are much more frankly in the foreground, dimming even further the portraits of individuals whose names are as often as not merely the formal occasion for his remarks.

The New Spoon River is a collection much more than a pattern. It is a container for what Mr. Masters thinks about things in general—or rather a fleet of little boats, each christened with a combination of the heavy, irrelevant fancy reminiscent of parlor cars and the actuality of the telephone directory (Didymus Hupp, Bayard Gable, Aristotle Dolegg, Lottie Chipp, Norris Littell), and each with its little cargo of Mr. Masters' poetic and philosophic freight. Some of the freight is original and striking; for instance, Herbert Nitze, on page 125: what a mess it would be if all the people ever born were still on the earth—

> Kings! walking the automat, trying to pass old pennies;
> Crusaders! chattering of dead centuries in the drug store;

and a magnificent defense of America as a land of romance and curious history (Meredith Phyfe, page 339). A good deal of it is poetic with a kind of road-bound aspiring poetry which almost but never

quite breaks free; a good deal more is saddened, blunt-edged irony, mixed with praise of truth and hope for the future. If such lines as these be taken as a repetition of the typical 1914 manner (Prof. Mackemeyer):

> My poverty and suffering and illness at last
> Were not due to the sin of running away
> With Professor Gardner's wife,

then the following (Isabel, William and Albert), are representative of Mr. Masters in 1924:

> Soul of the Universe! Eternal Love!
> Making for change and death—but for life!
> Multiform, mysterious, exhaustless . . .

As his featureless uniform ghosts move across the dim stage at the call of their names, Mr. Masters, a Greek chorus seated at an upright piano, strikes the somewhat ponderous and raw-toned chords of Fate, Irony, Death, Love, Crime, Disease, Waste, Embezzlement, Adultery and Psychosis. Love without Laughter, Crime without Comedy, Fate without Incident, Man without Men and Women. More important, stirring and beautiful than individual men and women are their clay-colored urges, their urge-colored lives. Mr. Masters has the gift for caustic, arresting figures of speech, but curiously enough he cannot, or will not, apply them to

character, and so his list of human names becomes a procession of similes referring to human nature, in the pursuit of truths about which he shows abounding earnestness, little zest, and less humor.

It would be unfair to deny merit to Mr. Masters, but his talent, as distinct from merit, has surely been overrated. We may agree with his fine feelings about life, we may find his sense of values in accord with our own, we may admire his courage, respect his deep sincerity, envy his high qualities of heart and soul, and at the same time be well aware that his mind and pen are not particularly engaging translators of this soul. After closing his book, his personality, genuine and idealistic beyond that of all but a handful of Americans, survives, but his words, his people, his creation, fade rapidly away. All those multiple lives have become merged into the fog of Life, all those headstones in Spoon River's graveyard have melted away into something called Death.

Life and Death have always been fair game for poets, but these two, plus politics, the local bank, scandal, war, millionaires, divorce and illegitimacy, are the fair game of leader writers and preachers as well. Mr. Masters is a little of all three—too much the preacher to be quite a poet, too much the poet to be a parson, too much the pulpit-poet to be a really good editorial writer.

"Paul Bunyan" *

Paul Bunyan is perhaps the only American mythological hero. He is the lumberjacks' Hercules, the man who can do anything, and whose exploits in the mouth of a skillful teller can make the greenhorn gasp with astonishment. Lumberjacks have been spinning yarns about him since the sixties, and into their tales have been woven a great many of the tall stories with which legs were pulled and long hours talked away in the early frontier days. Miss Shephard has skillfully, and it seems accurately, collected a number of Paul Bunyan stories, mainly told her by loggers themselves, into a most curious and fascinating book. The stories, at their height in the eighties and nineties, seem to be going out. but as a document of our American past it is extraordinarily interesting.

When Paul Bunyan was only three weeks old he thrashed around in his sleep and knocked down four square miles of standing timber. In his first pair of pants, he drove logs down the Kennebec, and became "the greatest white-water man that ever was." He tried to play a cornet, but it

* *Paul Bunyan*, by Esther Shephard. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company.

"straightened right out every last link and curve in it" and the noise it made was heard 185 miles. "He used to holler so loud when he was a kid, he could kill a whole pondful of bullfrogs with one holler."

Paul logged in nearly every state, and conducted many vast enterprises, some by accident. Accidentally dragging his peavey behind him produced the Grand Cañon. He dug out Puget sound. The King of Sweden employed him to clear North Dakota, so's he'd have somewhere to send 400,000 "onruly socialists" with whom he'd "just about got to the point of 'Ship or Shoot' "—but "he didn't like to shoot, because that always looks bad in the papers, and so he figured he'd better ship." There was a story that "Paul had dug the Pacific Ocean, too, the same as he dug the Sound, but . . . Old Mr. Pacific's own grandchildren officially denied the rumor here in court a couple of years ago." Paul was not always miraculously successful. He had no luck with his mine, for the assayer's office reported the gravel to be "igneous, prehistoric, and erroneous."

While Paul has the elasticity and indefiniteness of most fabulous figures, his favorite and partner, Babe the Blue Ox, is more distinct. He measured, between the eyes, "forty-two axhandles and a Star tobacco box." "His color was blue—a fine, pretty, deep blue." Together, Paul and Babe could haul

the naked log out of a tree and leave the bark and branches standing. "Paul used to have to carry a pair of field glasses around with him so as he could see what he was doing with his hind feet." Gigantic as he was, Babe was lost for three days in a hollow Sequoia Paul had cut down. "Paul Bunyan was sure fond of his Ox. 'Be faithful,' he used to say to him low under his breath as he walked along beside him. 'Be faithful, Babe, faithful.' " Babe died of a surfeit of hot cakes.

These stories are an inextricable mixture: of exact parallels with ancient mythology, its giants, heroes and cosmic explanations; of daydream longings to be stronger than one is, of things not meant to be believed, and others which might possibly take in a tenderfoot; of rambling, pointless imagination, of dreary, infantile ingenuity, of cruel practical jokes and of endless Yankee exaggeration, often strained and self-conscious, but sometimes sharp and pat, and like nothing else in the world. "Paul had such a good watch it gained enough time in the first three days to pretty near pay for itself." That must be an old one, but I had never heard it, nor most of the others, though they are in a familiar vein, and a vein which has fed much American humor, Mark Twain's in particular. The Sidehill dodger, and the Round River, sailing down which the loggers passed their own camp three times, alone

are conspicuously familiar. I don't recognize Mrs. Paul Bunyan's teeth. She was very fond of chicken, her teeth were false, and she lost them in the river. Paul fished them out by lowering down a drumstick—"when them teeth sees that drumstick they just naturally snaps right onto it." I don't recognize the bedbugs "which got so smart that when you wrote your name down in the big time-book in the office and the clerk put down the number of the bunk you was going to sleep in, the bedbugs would crawl along the pen so's to know where to find you afterwards; and they always found you, too."

A queer mixture indeed, of things that ring true and false, old and new. Zip was a dog, out of greyhound by dachshund, whose hind legs were much higher than his fore, so he was always running down hill and never got tired. Paul made a bridge of prune stones "14,000 feet long, 4000 feet high, and 4 feet wide." One of the cooks tried to make coffee by "just drawing his brown shirt through the coffee pot." Every regiment in France must have had that joke. The names of Paul's hands are real names: Shot Gunderson, Kangley, Charley Dobey, Red Jack, Blue-Nose Parker, Batiste Joe. They are the kind of men who, shut up in camp for a long cold winter, would tell how "the words froze in our mouths, and Paul had to send to England for a

frozen word interpreter." And one of them might really say, though one doubts it:

That was great loggin' we done in North Dakota though, like I said. Out in the woods before daylight—out among the pines. . . . And the sound of timber fallin', and the call of the loggers when they'd fell a tree: "Tim-m-mber-er! Down the line. Watch out!" I can't help it, but I always thought that a mighty pretty sound, and I do yet. "Tim-mm-ber! Down the line." A kind of fine music in the woods.

This is certainly not typical, nor the sort of thing the man on the "deacon seat" would indulge in. Nor would he often regret the passing of the "old time life and fun."

Them days the men all knowed each other. But now it ain't that way no more . . . just jump around from one camp to another . . . and there's all kinds of them. Japs and Hawaiians and Hindoos and Polacks and Bulgarians and I don't know what all, and you never know any of 'em. . . . And all they want to talk about is politics or capital and labor . . . or somethin' like that, or else somethin' they read in the *Argonaut* or *Windy Stories* or the *Literary Digest* . . .

Times are changing, but somewhere they are still thinking up good ones about how Paul had a steamer whose smokestack was so high that a long time after Paul sent a man up to paint it his grand-

son "came down and asked if he could have some more paint."

Here's the birth of mythology, right under our nose. What's its motive? Usually long winter nights, and a hot stove, and credulous greenhorns, and an old fable you don't believe yourself, touched up so that maybe one of the greenhorns, who ask silly questions about how and why and when, will believe it, or at any rate get laughed at.

Emigrés at Home

We have America very much on our minds just now; there was never a time when people who think and talk at all, thought and talked so much about this country they live in. If the mere fact of this growing self-consciousness is interesting, the contrast among the several thinkers and talkers is even more so. They may roughly be divided into three groups: Those who find America God's fairest spot of human residence; those who hate it at the bottom of their hearts but still live in it; and those who, neither quite hating nor loving it, can entertain at once something of both feelings, who feel their roots going down into it: those whom it irritates, fascinates and warms, those who like to rediscover it, who enjoy watching American things happen and American people behave, as things and people will, comically, tragically, casually, differently.

The first noisy group, though far more than the other two its voice determines what we shall do from day to day, is intellectually sterile, and, since we like to believe that brains will win in the end, we can pass it over in the silence decently accorded to potential losers. The third group, which might be

called neutral in its reaction to America, is chaotic, individual, and very variously articulate. There is so much to be said about it that for the present we had better say nothing.

The group we propose to talk about marches under the banner of "intellectual revolt," or rather disgust, and recruits a growing army of sensitive, intelligent people all out of key with a repulsive civilization. Most liberals have marched with it at least some miles; many are veterans. Unlike the other two, this group has brains, leaders, a destination. These people hate, they know what they hate, they say so with uncommon energy and ability. They hate—and we have marched with them—an America in which the high spots seem to be: mediocrity and bunk in politics, meanness and arrogance in business, safety first at church, prudery at home; they hate this country where art is vulgar and advertising both, where important demands are unsatisfied and unimportant ones created; where one man's thoughts are as his neighbor's and both waste their time exchanging them; where minorities must endure minimum wages, physically and morally; where there is big talk in public and small talk in private; a land covered from east to west by a great wash of dollars and of sentiment.

Is this America? Yes—the part we see and hear oftenest. No—for there is a lot more which we

don't often see or hear. Such is not the whole truth, not by a long shot. The whole truth is obscure, vague, underground; it must be obstinately tunneled after. But these intellectual rebels are not trying to snare the truth; they are trying to expose and annihilate what irritates and oppresses them. Like all people at war with something, they find fighting easier if they can give the enemy a single name, and see on his shoulders a single head to be chopped off. Instead of cursing and attacking political rottenness, business hypocrisy, social mediocrity, mental optimism, each separately, our rebels who begin with cursing American politics, American business, American society, the American mind, end by cursing America itself. It is easier to focus hatred on a family name than to divide it among all the members of that family. Mr. Mencken, who as much as any one leads these rebels, does not try to disentangle American vices from American virtues, preferring such statements as "America is a commonwealth of third-rate men." Under the lashings of Mr. Mencken and his followers, America has grown from the name of a certain part of the map into a personified demon. And, of course, if one is constructing a demon afterwards to slay him, one makes him one hundred percent evil. In the same way we personified "Germany" during

the war. This was easy: Germany was a long way off. And aren't many of our intellectual rebels a long way off from America?

"If they don't on the whole enjoy America, why do they go on living here?" They don't live here. Only people who have mentally left their own country can continue to see it so simply. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Mencken both see America rather simply. So do the host of followers, for whom *Babbitt*—that valiant, that useful, that ugly and formidable book—is their Bible, and H. L. Mencken their prophet. Lead us, they cry, out of this wilderness which is America, and which you have forever damaged in our eyes. Lead them—where to? Aren't they perhaps going into another private wilderness of their own, so remote that America leers at them, a single bodied, personal ogre, over the rim of its horizon? Aren't they intellectual émigrés, who shout, "Curse you, step-mother!" as they look out at her from their place of exile, across the foaming, isolating sea of their disgust? Their exile, with its furious protest, is useful to those of us who have stayed behind and still see America as a queer, lovable, tormenting mixture of things good and bad, and we thank these exiles for making American life more interesting and perhaps better in the long run. But we feel sorry for them. They have torn

up their roots, and have cut themselves off from that diversity which makes life, even American life, fascinating. Theirs will be a sterile path toward the end, and they will at the last find barrenness even in the solidarity of exile.

The Mirror and the Meat-ax *

The advice originally given by Mark Twain to would-be carvers of chicken Mr. Mencken has followed and applied to his dissection of life, literature and democracy:

"Use an ax and avoid the joints."

The third volume of Mr. Mencken's *Prejudices,* which is a collection of what he thinks, rather than what he has thought out, about poetry, honorific decorations, capital, criticism, Methodism, Upton Sinclair, the drama, James Huneker, liberty, Frank Harris, Man, education, political economy, Havelock Ellis and America, tells us, as usual, not very much about these things, but a good deal about Mr. Mencken himself.

It tells us—

That this heartiest and most efficient swinger of the meat-ax from Maine to California uses practically no other instrument.

That he reacts violently to everything before he has had time to see the whole of it.

That he steps indiscriminately on all insects because he likes to hear them scrunch.

That he gives verdicts, but not explanations.

* *Prejudices, Third Series,* by H. L. Mencken. New York, Alfred A. Knopf.

That he is utterly fearless of the world, and would be easier to read if he were only a little afraid of himself.

That he is too fond of buck-shot ever to be a sharp-shooter.

That he is a willful cynic who feeds his dislikes far better than his likes, and that in respect to this food he is a gourmand but not a gourmet.

That he can scarcely be seeking converts, for he is too deafening to be persuasive, and prefers attention to mere agreement.

That, useful yet irritating as he is, he is also unalterable, and would have been the same in any other society, or planet, or in any cycle of heaven or of hell.

That if the proof of good writing be in a consistent vigorous onslaught of words, fed from unfathomable springs of vocabulary, perfectly at command, Mr. Mencken is a good writer.

That if a good writer is one who can spend the fractional currency of language, and entice its minor rhythms, Mr. Mencken is no writer at all, but a brick factory.

That if to be ill-natured is to complain peevishly, and wear a mask of spleen, of malice, of repression, of personal defeat, then Mr. Mencken is not ill-natured.

That if to be kind is to try to understand, and

to give allowances for, and to doubt, and to pierce beneath appearances, then Mr. Mencken is anything but kind.

That if the modern spirit is compounded somewhat of skepticisms, and searchings, and self-analyses, and chasings after "mystic wrynesses," and respect, even love for, shadows and ripples and the not wholly white and the half-gray, Mr. Mencken is not of these times.

That if they can most truly be called intellectual citizens of America who can distinguish her wine from her lees, and yet drink down both together; who believe that the same tree can grow apples both sweet and rotten; who, disliking some of the children of one family, can love others, and be interested in all of them; who can take pleasure in a diversity and commingling of things good and evil; whose explorations are never at an end, nor judgments unchangeable, nor hearts inhospitable, nor minds incurious, nor ears closed to the shyer, the less obvious, the more fugitive, the smaller rumors of life—then Mr. Mencken is not an American.

What is he? A vigorous, whole-hearted, violent, stimulating, prejudiced, ruthless man who is—in his own words—"trying to arrest and challenge a sufficient body of readers, to make them pay attention to him"; he is, "first and last, simply trying to express himself," to achieve "that feeling of a ten-

sion relieved which Wagner achieved when he wrote *Die Walküre,* and a hen achieves every time she lays an egg."

This is very disarming, and almost holds up the process of attempting to break as many of Mr. Mencken's eggs as possible. One is for a moment tempted to rescue some very true and pleasant and warm and even discriminating passages in the book. One is tempted to ask Mr. Mencken to write oftener as he does about criticism, or poetry, or James Huneker. One is tempted to be "constructive." But he won't let us. Having disarmed us, he at once puts the weapon back in our hands: "All the benefits I have ever got from the critics of my work," he says, "have come from the destructive variety. A hearty slating always does me good. . . ."

Well, here goes. In general, Mr. Mencken's prose sounds like large stones being thrown into a dump-cart. He has more gusto than humor, more weight than edge, more appetite than taste, and a great deal more ink than intellect.

In particular, to pick upon the most vulnerable, but also the most formidable, part of the book, the essay "On Being an American": it will probably remain for years an unchallenged masterpiece of sandbag vituperation. Its burden is about as follows: "It is my conviction that the American

people, taking one with another, constitute the most timorous, sniveling, poltroonish, ignominious mob of serfs and goose steppers ever gathered under one flag in Christendom since the Middle Ages, and that they grow more timorous, more sniveling, more poltroonish, more ignominious, every day." The rest of the essay develops this theme in detail, with vast accessories of instances and epithets, and a steady procession of all Mr. Mencken's favorite villains.

We may agree completely with Mr. Mencken in disliking his villains, but he has worked into his pattern his villains and nothing, nobody else. At what narrow window commanding the American scene is he standing that he should give us, as the whole truth, such a fraction of it? Whom does he talk to, what does he see, what does he read that leaves in his mind so partial and warped a picture? The answer seems fairly obvious: he doesn't talk to people, he doesn't look at them as individuals, he reads. His picture is exactly the picture of our society that any one would form who read the newspapers and nothing else. In the newspapers all the absurd, the narrow, the poltroonish, the ignominious speeches and actions of men come up to the top like bubbles from the bottom of the sea. The bubbles don't tell the story of the things that swim about in the deeper waters. Mr. Mencken, watching the surface fever of American life as it boils and

bubbles in the newspaper columns, sees the fever and the surface and not much else. He records truly and vividly what he sees in the mirror he has chosen to hold up to the world, but what a mirror!

If only Mr. Mencken could be suddenly struck with an attack of complete illiteracy. . . .

But this will never happen. He will always present the spectacle of a man who ferociously enjoys spitting into a crooked mirror.

The Great American Novel

Critic A. Isn't it about time for that Great American Novel?

Critic B. You mean, isn't it about time for another? Remember we've always had one or more every year. "Great" is too good a word to keep in the stable where it gets rusty if we critics don't trot it out every few months just for exercise.

A. I mean really great, this time.

B. And what do you mean by that?

A. I mean a novel that really sums up, in sweeping fashion, all the currents of the age. A mirror of the forces that rule us and operate among us.

B. Name your forces.

A. Advertising, bigger and better business, jazz, newspaper headlines, beauty contests, True Story magazines, Shriners, the Ku Klux Klan, anti-evolution laws, balloon tires, movies, Florida real estate, Buicks make this hill on high, old ladies from Dubuque, four out of every five . . .

B. That's got nothing to do with the Great American Novel. That's all furniture. Besides it's been done. And a lot too often.

A. I don't agree. Perhaps it ought to be done

better, but it can't be done too often. The things I have mentioned are the very background and flavor of American life today. Typical of us, typical.

B. That's just it. If you begin to think of things as typical, you go on to think of people as types, which they aren't. If the novelist has the American background too much on his brain, he writes about ad-men and Babbitts and Elks and starved spinsters and jazz babies and not about people.

A. You can't disentangle people from the age in which they live.

B. And this is an age of uniformity, conformity, mediocrity?

A. It certainly is.

B. And therefore you think that Americans are pretty much all alike, and respond like puppets to the pressure of their surroundings?

A. I do.

B. I thought so. Now listen. You believe in rules. And definitions. You think this novel must "sum up the age." Now I don't believe in rules. But here's one that I'll stick by: people are all different.

A. But these people are all moved by the same forces.

B. That does not make them sink into classifica-

tions, except to a hasty, outward view. The novel you are asking for will be superficial.

A. On the contrary. If the novelist is any good he will write a profound interpretation of what's really going on underneath his civilization, of all the motive powers, sinister or trivial, that make his characters behave as they do.

B. That's not my idea of a novel. That would be history, or social criticism, or journalism. A novel can't have a thesis.

A. Certainly it could, if it took the artistic, the fictional form. Think of the novels that have done that, and yet been great works of art. Think of War and Peace, and the marvelous picture and comment on those times it gives you. And as for a thesis, if you look at it a certain way, the whole book was written to prove that individual men don't make history.

B. Nobody but Tolstoy cared a whoop about that. We read it for the people, and not for his history or his thesis. I'll always remember Natasha, though I forgot his thesis long ago.

A. The picture presented by our American civilization is a thesis, and no novelist ought to disregard it. The American novelist ought to take that as his subject matter, and not confine himself to an interesting story or a few characters he happens to be fond of.

B. Then if you knew ten budding novelists, all of them really promising, you'd advise them to turn to the American scene in general, and write about that? You'd tell them to understand movies and chewing gum and automobiles and the small town, and to fit their characters into their vision of this scheme of things?

A. I think I would.

B. Then you'd get ten slightly varying versions of *Babbitt* and *Main Street*. Lord, how monotonous! And that would be dangerous advice for another reason. If you ask writers to look first at the general scheme of things, of course, when they see it at all clearly, they'll dislike it, and some of this dislike will inevitably be visited upon their characters.

A. Then what's your prescription?

B. I'd have them go at it the other way around. Have them study Americans, not America. Once they got in the habit of really looking at people, listening to them, with eyes unbiassed by the blare and limelight and cheapness and uniformity of American life, they would begin to see, not uniformity, but endless diversity. The novelist should always begin with people.

A. He should begin with a point of view. Perhaps he may succeed in concealing it artfully, but he ought to have one. Otherwise his work will be

aimless. Ring Lardner for instance. A sense of character, a great talent for reproducing talk, and a fine humorist, but where does he land you? What's it all about? If he possessed a point of view, he might by now have written the Great American Novel. But he hasn't. And yet he "begins with people," as you advise.

B. If he hasn't actually done it, he's come as near the Great American Novel as anybody. I mean he's on the right trail. As soon as others follow that trail, and quit writing small town autobiographies and satires, we'll find that America begins to open up, and split up, and separate into hundreds and thousands of fascinating people all worth writing about.

A. And yet intellectually we might remain as set and uniform as ever, no matter what trail a few were following. Face the facts, admit the sad state of things intellectual and artistic. What are we going to do about this dead level America?

B. Not harp on it, but explore, discover, subdivide, individualize. Acquire a passion for people, become collectors of people. The habit of looking for the individual underneath the uniformity, and writing about him, will in itself cause a great deal of the uniformity to disappear. For this uniformity is partly only a habit of our own minds. We have complained about it so much that

we find pleasure and self-justification in finding more of it than exists.

B. Your novelist, because of his passion for the trees, will lose sight of the forest.

A. So much the better. Nobody can really find out the truth about a forest, but much may be known about a tree, and no two trees are alike. And no two Americans are alike. If the Great American Novel is to be founded on any generalization, let it be on this one.

Read America First *

You are an intelligent American, dear reader, and so we can talk to you as man to man. You read your Dickens and Thackeray and Scott, or they were read to you as a child, you left high school with honors and a reputation as half-back, you went to college, avoided serious trouble with the dean, read some Flaubert, Dostoevsky and Oscar Wilde, mowed the lawn during vacations, went back again in October to a pleasant salad of government, history of art, sociology and French literature, and entered the American scene through the side door of one of the learned professions, to which you brought some knowledge, a little taste, and a strong feeling that the people you met were unequally divided between those who were acutely aware that they were living in America and those who merely lived there. You were an American, to be sure, and in a vague way proud of it, but at the same time you knew better. You wanted a different America. Perhaps you wanted it to be more like Europe, perhaps your reading or travels had implanted in you a yearning for more ivy, soirées, peasants and cynicism, but at any rate you

* *What of It?* by Ring Lardner. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons.

were discontented, and believed that if there were more people about you who shared your own feeling of maladjustment, things would improve. It turned out, as time went on, that there were many after all who felt just as you did. Novels and magazines and plays and articles began to pour from them, and you read them and joined the movement. The movement, however, cared little about exploration, and a great deal about exposure. It was in the hands of people who had a point to prove, and who found ever so much material suitable to their purpose. They had only to look up and down the street, throw away the mail, open the paper, and a procession of silly headlines, an army of four-flushers, salesmen, boosters, yes-and-no men, morons, realtors and spiritual hicks rushed down their fountain pens straight into your favorite reading-matter. There were other things and men to look at, too, but they lay beneath the surface, and when one's feeling of being in a minority has dethroned amusement in favor of scorn, digging beneath the surface comes hard.

The surface of American life screams at us all day long, and through the din it is very difficult to catch the real human undertones. No wonder the "intelligent American" ends by believing that we are all painfully alike; no wonder he clings to the writers who pillory the fatuous monotony and feed

him rich, juicy ridicule until his uneasiness fattens into a philosophy. No wonder he feels like an exile among incomprehensible, barbarous natives, and seeks the society of the other exiles. He was born in this country, yet it is not his, he has not made it what it has become, he cannot remake it nearer his desire; the natives, like Chinamen, all begin to look alike to him, he cannot even speak their language, and expressmen call him "professor."

In order to find out whether or not the state of exile in such an individual is incurable, give him some Ring Lardner to read. He will wonder why ("Ring Lardner is a humorist, I'm told. Doesn't he write stories about baseball players?") and he will dip into *You Know Me, Al* with supercilious curiosity. If he doesn't read to the end, or doesn't laugh, or can't understand the talk, there's little or no hope for him, and he had better be allowed to continue and end his days in exile. But if he comes back for more, then there's hope for him, and more reading of the same kind will make him realize he's a native after all, and bring him back to America. For Ring Lardner is the most thoroughly American writer we have today, and one of the most American we have ever had.

Just what does that mean: an American writer? One, first of all, who is not too conscious of the fact that he is writing about America, who does

not investigate his neighbors, nor lump them all together as Americans, seeking to find their likenesses rather than their differences; one who is not trying to "interpret," or to satirize, or to correct, or to divide them into species of one great peculiar genius; one who writes about people rather than Americans. One who accepts the country so completely that he does not even know he is accepting it. One who sees America, not as a country full of tendencies, types, curiosities, weaknesses, but simply a place full of people, all of them interesting when you get to know them well. And he can also write about these people in their own language.

It is not one language, which can be learned from a book or by going about from state to state. Perhaps no other language is richer or more variable. It changes from one part of the country to another, in words, in accent, in intonation. It changes from class to class, and there are hundreds of classes, each shading off into the next. It changes according to occupation also, and no other country has more people who have traveled far from where they began, who have had dozens of occupations, who have moved about from one class to another; in no country are there to be found more subtle differences in language from individual to individual. The two business men you meet on a train sound alike at first, but if you listen carefully you will

hear differences and shadings that come from the fact that one of them went to high school, while the other did not, that one of them has been an automobile mechanic and the other likes to play poker, that one of them makes socks and the other loose-leaf notebooks, that one of them reads headlines and the other the *Saturday Evening Post,* that one of them married a Californian, the other a girl from Massachusetts, that one of them has several children, alive and talking, while the other has no children but goes to a great many conventions. And they will talk differently again, using fragments of other personal dialects, according to whether they are calm or excited, drunk or sober. For every individual, aside from the idiosyncrasy of what he actually says, there is a brand of talk which he uses and which is the only right talk to put into his mouth if you are writing a story about him.

Ring Lardner knows this instinctively. There is nobody else writing about Americans who knows even half as well as he what talk sounds natural in this or that particular mouth. If he has been able or chosen to speak, so far, only about a dozen different languages when there remain so many thousands of others, still, this is far more than any other American writer can command. And when Ring Lardner speaks one of these languages through one

of his characters he does so without a trace of accent. The one he has used oftenest, and for which he is most famous, is the talk of the ball player Jack Keefe in *You Know Me, Al.* Jack is a good-hearted, boastful, simple-minded pitcher who breaks into the big league. He always has an alibi, his leg is there for anybody to pull, and almost anybody can kid the life out of him. But Ring Lardner never kids him himself. He lets Jack talk, and stays in the background. And so Jack always keeps in character. There are few, if any, realler characters in American fiction today. Temptations to new slang, to the invention of slang, are tremendous, but Jack never uses any slang or any talk but his own, and it remains absolutely his own to the end. Even the wildest deceptions practiced on him, even the most foolish alibis he offers, ring true because of the consistency of his character and his talk.

Besides being a first-rate character sketch and a remarkable creation in the American language, *You Know Me, Al* was also extremely funny, one of those few books which makes you laugh out loud. Most people enjoyed the fun so much to the exclusion of the characterization and language that Ring Lardner found that he was expected to be first of all a humorist, and other things incidentally. So we have *The Real Dope,* an inferior sequel to *You*

Know Me, Al, in which Jack Keefe goes to France as a soldier and has his leg pulled every few pages. The talk is just as good, but the character not nearly so real, and the invention runs a little thin. *The Big Town,* while written basically in the same language, is a very able piece of work, in which the characters are as real, if a little burlesqued, and the talk just as subtly true to those characters as in *You Know Me, Al.* Husband, wife and sister-in-law inherited some money and have come from South Bend to New York to marry off sister-in-law. There is a good deal of farce, and a hurried unsatisfactory end, but the kidding and the talk remain in key. It is broader than *You Know Me, Al,* more pungent, more in the line of the old-fashioned American exaggeration. Daley is talking to Katie.

"I ain't never tried to handle the fair sex and I don't know if I could or not. But I've just met one that I think could handle me." And he give her a look that you could pour on a waffle.

There is behind all the wise-cracks and good fun of *The Big Town* a curiously sardonic undertone all the stranger and more original for being mixed with irresponsible light-heartedness. In Ring Lardner's last two books this quality is more pronounced—but let us take them one by one. *How*

to Write Short Stories, published recently, remains far and away his best work. Here he is not trying too hard to be humorous, and in two or three stories trying to do something very different from anything he has done before. The bitter veracity of "The Champion" is a thousand miles from Jack Keefe, busher and bonehead. It is the only story of his I know not written in some shading of the American language overheard and recreated. A straight-out, narrow, cold, ferocious, and memorable wallop. The other stories are written in the language of one or both characters. "Some Like Them Cold" is a masterpiece, and shows better than anything else Ring Lardner's conquest of American talk, and through that, of American people. A man and a girl are writing to each other. The story is quite simple, the difference between the characters and their changing feelings very subtle, very difficult to do well. At the end one is not quite sure that the correspondence of two real people has not been laid open. Best of all is "The Golden Honeymoon," in another kind of talk. Two old people go south on a long-deferred honeymoon. The old man tells the story. He talks like this:

Our train pulled out of Washington at 9:40 P.M. and Mother and I turned in early, I taking the upper. During the night we passed through the green fields of old

Virginia, though it was too dark to tell if they was green or what color. When we got up in the morning, we was at Fayetteville, North Carolina. We had breakfast in the dining car and after breakfast I got in conversation with the man in the next compartment to ours. He was from Lebanon, New Hampshire, and a man about eighty years of age. His wife was with him, and two unmarried daughters and I made the remark that I should think the four of them would be crowded in one compartment, but he said they had made the trip every winter for fifteen years and knowed how to keep out of each other's way. He said they was bound for Tarpon Springs.

We reached Charleston, South Carolina, at 12:50 P.M., and arrived at Savannah, Georgia, at 4:20. We reached Jacksonville, Florida, at 8:45 P.M. and had an hour and a quarter to lay over there. . . .

At first one enjoys the genial flatness. At the end one has seen two whole lives, sad and homely and humorous and isolated. And this author lets the old man talk and tell the whole story, without ever interrupting.

This last volume, coming so soon after an example of what Ring Lardner could really do in "The Golden Honeymoon," is disappointing. The definite attempt to do different kinds of stories, most of them magnificently successful each in its own key, has given way to a rather aimless collection of short pieces, funny in spots, but thin, a little forced and restless, to facetious editorials, to bright ideas, to a rather mediocre account of a trip

to Europe in no particular language. But in the middle of the volume are three short nonsense plays utterly unlike anything he has ever done, funnier than anything he has ever done. Mad, wild, gorgeous nonsense. They belong to that rare category of nonsense which is ruined by being read aloud because of the uncontrollable convulsions of the reader and the audience. One attempt to read aloud "I Gaspiri (The Upholsterers)" puts Ring Lardner well up in the front rank of the nonsense makers.

But these plays are happy accidents. Ring Lardner remains the Lardner of *You Know Me, Al* and "The Golden Honeymoon," the writer closest of all to America and its innumerable, different, amusing, pathetic people, speaking each his little variation of an unlearnable language.

"Is Zat So?" *

Musical Irish from crosstown motormen and cops, the homely burr of Iowa in the lobbies of the Waldorf, soft r's from the cloak-and-suit men around Twenty-third Street, a phrase or two of mincing grease-paint English on Broadway, an occasional New England "a" heard chez Nedick, the mongrel dialects of Astoria, Newark, Yonkers in the first balcony, just plain American twanging at the dress-goods counter, and behind all these, overshadowing all these, the rich, tough and friendly inflection of New York, of Toyd and Seccanavnya, of the streets nearest the two rivers, of the gas houses, and the dim corners under the elevated. You may be all kinds of a hundred percent American, but you'll find this lingo isn't yours to speak unless you're born to it. You'd do better to tackle Castilian or Viennese or Montmartrois or Esperanto with Mr. Berlitz. You may be every inch a New Yorker too, and know the slang and think you can hand out the local back-talk and ride the natives in their own woids. But the words are nothing—if you haven't got the accent, the aggres-

* *Is Zat So?* A comedy by James Gleason and Robert Taber. At Chanin's Forty-sixth Street Theater.

sive, sarcastic inflection, the peculiar drop-curve and upshoot in the voice, rough, angry, friendly at bottom you're just another stranger.

"Johnny," said the teacher, "do you know what a stoic is?" "Why, sure, dat's the boid what brings de goils." And that's about as much of New York language as one can put on paper. On paper it's nothing. The words, the juicy original slang phrases, are nothing without the voice that speaks them naturally. When you run across a real, natural New York voice, you stop and listen, completely fascinated, no matter what the voice is saying. A little of this has got into the theater from time to time, but only in fragments. Now at last a brilliant team, James Gleason and Robert Armstrong, have given us the real article. For rich, native humor their dialogue is the best thing in the theater for a long, long while, and *Is Zat So?* if it could be collapsed into the too brief moments when one of those two, or both together, are talking, would be a play to see again and again.

The play itself is too complicated, and quite feeble. A young fighter from the gas-house district (Armstrong) and his manager (Gleason) are on their uppers. They meet up with the scion of a rich house. The scion's sister is married to a crook, but the goods are not yet on him. The fighters wonder where they have seen him before. The

servants of this wealthy house having left, brother appoints the gas-house boys butler and second man. There is a nurse—for the boxer, and a pretty stenographer—for his manager. Some time later we see the family at breakfast, plus small boy, by now devoted to the manager, whom he calls Uncle Hap. Enter rich friend. A fight is arranged between Armstrong and rich friend's chauffeur. Heavy bets between friend and crook husband. Later: the house all set for the fight. Thin fringe of society audience. Gong. Third round. Crooked husband offers Armstrong big money to throw the fight. Indignant refusal. But in the middle of the round Armstrong in a flash remembers where he has seen husband before, stares, uncovers his chin, and takes the count from an inferior opponent. Foul play! The rich scion thinks he has been double-crossed, the boys' explanations are misunderstood, and exeunt in disgrace. In the last act Armstrong has won the world's lightweight championship, the mistake is explained, the nurse and the stenographer say yes, and the crook is beaten up—off stage.

But when the play is over one remembers almost nothing of all this, and the impression one takes away is only that of two gorgeous characters and their language. The lasting impression, for all the plot-weaving that comes after it, is that of the first

scene, with Armstrong and Gleason alone in the street under an arc-light, sore, down and out, and their first mutual recriminations—

> Is Zat So?
> Is ZAT so!
> Ye-ah, that's so!

These are, here and throughout, the best lines of the play. Their utterly foolish and meaningless appearance in print is the highest testimonial to the genius of the actors, who have invented, for this simple libretto, a wonderful score, a magically rhythmic and subtle and memorable pattern of inflection. Almost any boob can whistle an aria from an opera he has just heard, but one wanders about for days with Gleason and Armstrong's accent almost, but not quite, in one's ears, tantalized, straining, maddeningly unable to recapture it. Those who have seen and enjoyed this play are a little brotherhood apart; they exclaim upon meeting, Is ZAT so? over and over again, in every different tone of voice, never getting it quite right, but always laughing as at a particularly happy memory.

There is nothing else quite as good as these three words, but there are a lot of other good things. Nearly all the remarks that pass between Gleason and Armstrong are somehow unaccountably funny.

Half the time they would be just as funny if we didn't hear what they said, and only the curiously aggressive, telescoped whine of the gas-house reached our ears. But they are also well worth looking at, with very neat, sudden gestures and postures to accompany the words, whether angry, nervous, pleading or merely conversational. The silly plot, which drags in so many other people and sub-plots we'd just as soon be without, places these two in situations highly vulnerable to mere low-comedy or exaggeration, but Gleason and Armstrong always manage something original. Just the sight of the boxer in his footman's livery, shuffling about so far from the ring with his gloveless hands awkwardly and harmlessly swinging at his side; just the sound that Gleason makes when in the middle of a Fourteenth Street comeback he remembers he is a butler, are worth going a long way to see and hear.

They speak a language common to both of them. It is a real language, not a dialect, because each uses it in his own way, and keeps his words and accent true to his own character. They had models from actual life to learn it from, yet it seems too much a part of them to have been learnt. And at the same time it is something more than the language used by the unself-conscious native New Yorker, something sharper, more alive, not just a

borrowing of picturesque slang, nor burlesque, nor even a good caricature, but more like the portrait of a language by a sensitive artist who knew what to underline and when not to emphasize too much, who knew, above all, that the personality of a language lives in its delicate and raw and unlearnable inflections.

To those who have seen Gleason and Armstrong and say it's nothing remarkable, I answer, Is ZAT so? and if they don't come back in an accent just as foreign, just as broken, but unmistakably imitative of something we have both heard, with Ye-ah, that's so, it simply proves they missed the point entirely.

"What Price Glory" *

Where is our war now? *Où sont les neiges . . .* Where is last year's dirty wash? A few are still wearing the war, some proudly, others like a last torn buttonless shirt, the only one they have. But for most of us the war has gone around the corner; it has been written up and filed away; it is half-remembered and half-forgotten; it lies scattered among thousands of imperfect individual memories, there to be either cursed or glorified out of all resemblance to what it actually was; it rests petrified in a million yellowing pages of stony half-truth, in records, reports, press cables, editorials, books, from which those who come after us will diligently reconstruct a logical skeleton, an accurate, lying skeleton of the living Thing we saw and heard.

They will write histories of the war, novels, romances about it, and, inevitably, plays. They will make most of our mistakes at such a job all over again. They will do Napoleon at Waterloo, Grant at Appomattox, Hindenburg here, Foch there, admirals at Jutland, generals at Verdun, soldiers in

* *What Price Glory*, a play by Maxwell Anderson and Laurence Stallings; directed by Arthur Hopkins. At the Plymouth Theater, September 5, 1924.

the trenches, wives at home, bombs, wounds, noise, agony and heroism all over again. We've done it ourselves, many times, in plays full of the speech of authors, not soldiers, in plays horrifying or beautifying in which war is seen as something separate from life, inhabited by men who must therefore behave like soldiers rather than men. This is war, the playwrights have said to themselves, and it must be treated differently.

The authors of *What Price Glory* have had no such obsession. They have nothing they want to prove, no propaganda one way or the other to inflict. They do not seem to have had it on their minds that this play was about the war, which is one reason why it is far and away the best war play we have seen. But that is only one of its qualities, for it is much more than a war play. Yet it escapes definition, being not so much a play as a number of highly remarkable characters hung on the line of a necessary but unimportant plot in a series of richly memorable scenes.

It is by scenes, by dialogue and by characters rather than as a play that one remembers it. Three marines in a huge bare room near the front, talking about women—wisely naïve soldiers' talk. A criss-cross of gay, unpremeditated street-colored slang, slang not the sole property of the marines, nor of soldiers, but of Americans, talk heard in the

trenches, but also around the Union Depot while the express trucks are waiting for their load. A top-sergeant and a captain of marines, old leathernecks who had served around the world together, deadly enemies (a girl, of course) meeting again in a knife-edged interchange of sass and callous repressed fury, all the sharper for being whetted by their humor. A little French girl, cause of their renewed rivalry, trotting amiably about in sabots; not too pretty, a bit too plump, not the French girl of the stage, but exactly the little bistro keeper's daughter of a small town behind the lines. Her father, spouting his shrewd flowery protest that the Americans had debauched his girl, clamoring for her marriage, for 500 francs' damages. The Captain, thoroughly, swayingly drunk, bear-like, stiff-gestured, gradually sobering up to meet the General on his rounds. The act in the cellar, with the brand new trench-coated shave-tails at rigid salute, the Captain's bitterly mocking salaam to them, boots off, legs bare; the Captain's fierce sarcasm, his good nature, crudeness, savage language, sudden tenderness; with the strange conversation about the soul between four soldiers, disconnected, grotesque, meaningless and touching as it really would have been. Old Fergy, the mess sergeant, playing solitaire as he waits for the outfit, talking to the French girl (who does not understand) about

Swenson, the Swede, who Fergy hopes will come back, because he loves to see him eat. The mad entrance of three of the outfit, their rapturous, childlike pounding on the table for minutes, hours. And that most remarkable scene of all, one of the most remarkable on any stage for a long while, the dialogue between the Captain and the Sergeant, the latter in night-drawers and a blue French peasant's smock, offering each other drinks, bowing in drunken, courtly silence, alternately addressing each other in devious rhetoric, or gruff bludgeon slang, or stinging insult, or the gorgeous far-ranging non-sequiturs of cognac.

In this scene are united, for a few minutes, all the qualities of the play. Here we have action, which in the other acts is often no more than incident; here we have the play of character on character rather than the mere succession of characters; and here the characters speak most truly their own words, rather than wear, as happens frequently in the rest of the play, the at times too generous gift of their authors. For *What Price Glory* is far richer in language than almost any play we have seen. It is full, chuck-full, of "lines," those short unerring shafts of speech that make an audience rock and roar and that are quotable and quoted long, long after. Most of them ring true in the mouths of the characters speaking them; only occasionally do we hear a phrase that comes too ob-

viously from the authors. Some critics, chiefly female, in real or affected horror, have protested at the swearing, which is a necessary, and, if one has ever heard it before, hardly noticeable feature of any play that pretends to reproduce real people in real talk. At that, it is very much milder than the original.

The actors on the whole fit their parts admirably. The majority of them are ex-soldiers themselves, and know very well what they are acting about. They do not have to stretch and strain themselves into their parts, being more than half-way there already. We doubt whether that counsel of perfection which rules that a really good actor ought to be able to play any part regardless of his own private experience, if applied in this case, would have been half as successful as the process of picking men who approached the roles they were to act. No matter what the gifts of Mr. Boyd and Mr. Wolheim may be as actors in general, in this particular their performance is so solid, memorable and life-like that we don't see the difference.

Years from now, when a new generation wants to know, not its histories and propagandas, its mechanisms, glories and brutalities, but what the war smelt and tasted like, to Americans in it, we doubt if they can do better than put on a revival of this real and ringing and fiercely good-humored play by Mr. Anderson and Mr. Stallings.

"Abie's Irish Rose"

The sign over the theater says "1199th performance."

And every performance has been full. And there is another company in Chicago. And there are other facsimiles of this gold mine touring Canada and the rest of the United States. One of them is said to have played in Lehigh, Pa., for twenty-nine weeks. Companies in England too. An offer of one million dollars for the movie rights has been refused. Altogether, Miss Anne Nichols, who wrote the play, produced it, valiantly kept it alive at the beginning when nobody else thought it would succeed, who controls the original great-grandfather at the Republic Theater, and all its progeny on tour as well, is in a fair way to clear two or three million dollars. It's the phenomenon of the age. Only a handful of California forty-niners ever made as much out of their glittering pay dirt as she has made out of this—well, let's not call it names. Let's go and see it instead.

One enters the theater determined to catch the secret of Abie's success. Many more than a million people have seen it, thousands have seen it more than once, many have seen it a dozen times, and

brought all their friends. There must be a secret. Bad plays are often popular, but not as popular as this. *Abie's Irish Rose* must have some great simple human virtue that endears it to its millions. . . .

First act. Jewish interior. A prosperous, nondescript apartment. Three Jewish "characters": Mrs. Cohen, fat and voluble, always talking about her operation for appendicitis, Mr. Cohen, ridiculously small, bearded, jumpy, blinking eyes through tortoise-shell glasses. Solomon Levy, middle-aged, father-type, Jewish clothing merchant comedian, with skull-cap. A crackle of broad repartee. The house laughs. A few real wise-cracks. The house comes down. Mr. Levy is talking about his son, Abie, his hopes for him, and how Abie has brought lots of girls to the house, none of them Jewish.

MR. LEVY. I vant grandchildren, dozens and dozens of them.

MR. COHEN. Listen—right avay he talks wholesale!

The stage is empty. Enter Abie and his girl. They have secretly been married the week before by a Methodist minister. Her name is Rosemary Murphy. She is Irish (Abie is Jewish—don't forget this point). Enter Papa Levy. "What's your name?" "Rosemary." "I don't like that name—What's your last name?" Abie comes to the res-

cue. "Murfisky!" The house roars. Mr. Levy is completely taken in. Already he is charmed by her. Wedding next week. Rose and the Cohens stay to dinner. Jokes about kosher food. Curtain with everybody happy.

This act is fairly amusing. It bears, at times, a recognizable resemblance to real life. Some of the lines are quite funny. But the house roars nearly all the time. What they laugh at would strike you and me as harmless, mild, and very, very obvious. The outlines of the characters are painted in with a brush at least a mile wide. And all of them are lovable. All but one are Jewish, and three of them thoroughly, unmistakably, ridiculously Jewish, with an accent a foot thick, and bits of Yiddish thrown in.

Second act. The wedding. The apartment is decorated with ribbons and flowers and two orange trees, dazzlingly fruitful with real oranges. Rosie, as she is now called, hopes that her father, Patrick Murphy, will not arrive on time. He will be terribly angry. He has been told that Abie is Irish. Mrs. Cohen is summoned from next door.

MR. LEVY. She hasn't any appendix, but she's a nice woman.

This is the next best line in the whole play. The house roars. Not for the last time. Enter Abie,

in a well-fitting dress suit. Enter Mr. Levy in same plus skull-cap. The suit cost $59.98. Roars. Enter Mr. Cohen, about four feet high, in same, wearing a high hat. Enter Father Samuels. A rabbi, but otherwise not Jewish-looking, and far from Jewish-spoken. Here comes the bride. Procession of bridesmaids. The wedding is in the next room. Mr. Levy, humming Hebrew wedding hymn, tarries emotionally alone, jams high hat on over skull-cap, and exit. Enter Patrick Murphy, very burly, very Mavourneen-shamrock-begorrah Irish, with Father Whalen. Father Whalen does not look particularly Irish, nor is he Irish-spoken. He is a priest. Awkward pause. The wrong house? A Jewish wedding? Then the awful deceit breaks. Murfisky! Twenty minutes of burlesque anger and explanations, giving opportunity for every variety of cart-horse-play. Murphy squares off, doubles his fists, rolls up his cuffs three separate times, hoots and shouts at the Jewish scene, at the names, at Mr. Cohen in his high hat. For a moment the priest and the rabbi are left alone. The house is suddenly hushed, with the discipline of a well-trained chorus. A very different stop is apparently going to be pulled out, a solemn stop, and they obey. Rabbi Samuels and Father Whalen were both in France with the A. E. F. "I ministered to many of the boys of your faith." Sol-

emn platitudes on the sofa. The hush continues. They think they have met before—it was in France, but they never go on to try to discover just where. Suffice it that they were in France together, and agree that religion was no bar there, and that Jews, Catholics and Protestants are all going to the same place. . . . After the broad-gauge humor of the other scenes, this little intervention, with its hasty bathos and insincerity, makes one profoundly uncomfortable. All the more uncomfortable because all one's neighbors seem to like it.

As the ceremony just completed seems to have been void and null, Father Whalen, forever kind and just, performs another. They are tied tight.

Third act. In Abie and Rosie's apartment. A baby. Neither father has helped them, and they have been having a hard time. A Christmas tree, surmounted by the six-pointed star. Rose, crooning an Irish song, takes the baby off-stage. Enter Mr. and Mrs. Cohen. Roars. More broad comedy. Jokes about ham. Roars and roars. . . . The stage is empty. Enter Father Whalen, followed by Patrick Murphy, with a large toy wrapped up. If it's a girl, he'll give them a lot of money. Exit. Enter Rabbi Samuels, followed by Mr. Levy, with a large bundle of toys. If it's a boy, he'll give them a lot of money. The two fathers catch each other unwrapping the bundles.

Declaration of comic war. One hopes for a girl, the other for a boy. A baby is brought in. A girl. Murphy croons over her. Then—everybody saw it coming, which made their pleasure all the greater—a boy, for Levy. Twins! The fathers are reconciled. The races unite. Happiness, sweetness, peace, just reward, barrels of syrupy oil on artificial waves.

If one did not go to see *Abie's Irish Rose* as a phenomenon, the play, which begins with mild, broad fun in the first act, and broadens rapidly toward the end with interludes of pure sentimentality and sermonizing, would be progressively depressing, and one would leave all the more sad because all the rest of the audience liked it so uproariously. But since it is worth about three million dollars, one's chief interest is in trying to find out the great secret—why do people like it, love it, swallow it, shout at it, go away and come back with their friends for more?

One can think of a dozen reasons. It is nice to everybody. The Jews are made fun of, their persons on the stage are lovable caricatures, they wear skull-caps, eat ham and don't care for Christmas trees. But they are never insulted. Patrick Murphy is furious, but he never calls Levy either Yid, kike, or sheeny, which is what he would do in real life. There is nothing said to sting the Jews. The

mockery is restricted to religion. Race is kept entirely out of the dialogue and action, and is only implicit in the make-up and speech of the characters.

The spirit is that of get-together. The feelings of people who, belonging to whatever race or religion, find that race and religion disliked by their neighbors, are soothed and warmed. People want salve, for most people are wounded somewhere, sometimes. At *Abie's Irish Rose* all wounds are salved. The audience is warm and happy every minute they are in their seats.

There is no villain. Everybody on the stage is likable. Everybody loves everybody else. Everybody in the end is happy. Everything succeeds.

The humor never flags. The house titters or roars, and one's neighbors break into shouts of glee and nudge each other. It is the greatest common multiple of humor, the broad open-work humor that millions shake at every time somebody slips on a banana peel. But in this play so full of banana peels nobody ever gets hurt.

Nothing succeeds like success. People will go to see *Abie's Irish Rose* because it has been running three years, because all their friends have seen it, if for no other reason.

But still we haven't laid our hands on the secret. There must be a deeper reason than all these,

a more human, a more subtle one. Eleven hundred ninety-nine performances! What is it? How can the magic combination be found again? How would you like three million dollars? Go after the secret!

Perhaps there isn't any. Perhaps there is. Toss a coin.

Henry Ford

The little tin treasure, half rattling box, half ugly black beetle that will crawl up anywhere—the Peace Ship—five dollars a day for labor—eight dollars per second income—the menace of the Jews—the picnics with Edison and John Burroughs—Muscle Shoals—a business worth a billion dollars—seven thousand cars a week—the cow must go—country dances at the Wayside Inn—out of some such jumble of quaint facts and enormous figures the average man builds his picture of Henry Ford, who interests him as the producer of a car he rides in, as a picturesque billionaire, and as a man with ideas of how the country should be run.

Ford is perhaps most of all interesting as an example of how far in the world a man can go who starts riding on one idea and never gets out of the saddle. On this fiery horse he can make jumps where other more intelligent, socialized, open-minded men have to get off and walk; he can guess across obstacles where others, who prefer to think things out, find that thinking is the long way round.

This single idea came to Ford a long time ago. He said: "I will build a motor car for the multitude," when it was obvious that only a few rich

people would buy them. He is still doing it, with fabulous success, and while many other purposes, some by-products and some wildly different, have taken root in his mind, it is still the center of his life. There have been many abler men of a mechanical turn of mind, many abler business men, many more intelligent, many shrewder guessers, but in Ford these qualities were to a supreme degree combined with exact knowledge of where he wanted to go.

One bar to success before men in other ways as able as Ford was a preoccupation with what the public wanted—or what they imagined it wanted. Ford knew only what they ought to have. The market for a particular product, he says, is four-fifths made up of people who do not know how they want it made. And quite correctly he imposed his own product on a public which proceeded to eat it up. The Ford car, if it was to be used by the multitude, had to be fool-proof, and the farther one goes toward the perfect automobile, the more one is forced to build into it little complications that require care and a mechanical temperament.

The Ford car has grown simpler and simpler. Individual demands, likes and dislikes, which the average manufacturer thinks he has to take into account, are nothing to Ford. Let the man who has the money buy a better car; the Ford car will

continue to be the same car to all men. "Any customer," says Henry Ford, "can have his Ford painted any color that he wants so long as it is black." Any customer is free to attach a better water-cooling system, a better oil-pump, a carburetor that will give him more miles per gallon. Engineers have pointed out that if really efficient carburetors were attached to Ford cars, their owners would save about half a billion dollars in gasoline every year. In each town and city are dozens of stores selling nothing but improved attachments and accessories to the regulation Ford. But the Ford car, as its creator himself readily admits, is in all essentials the same car it was in 1907.

But if the car itself has not changed, the methods of producing it, the vast batteries of automatic machinery and their relation to the regiments of labor who man them have never stopped changing. In the constant drive to cut down cost, Henry Ford has dealt ruthlessly with machinery. Any machine will be scrapped tomorrow if it is possible to substitute some other which will save a few cents on a part. Other manufacturers in quantity, when an improvement offers, must consider the money invested in the machinery which would be scrapped. Ford, who has not borrowed money, who has no such burdens, can scrap at will, and does so. The methods of quantity production were not his in-

vention, in whole or in detail; his genius lies in the whole-hearted and fearless application of them to a particular product. He has applied quantity production to its limit, or rather he is still widening the application, for there is no limit.

Just as machine has supplanted machine in the factory, so has Ford brought, one after the other, most of the sources of supply within his control. He had enough disagreeable experiences with concerns which sold him parts on contract. The unpleasantness was mutual, for there are many stories of suppliers to Ford who, upon seeking to renew a contract, were quoted prices which would have put them out of business. Now Ford owns a coal mine, an iron range, forests, a railroad, and has gradually either bought up small factories which used to sell him parts, or has started making the parts himself. When Ford bought a glass factory, people used to say, "Henry's gone into the glass business." But he is interested in only one business: his own automobile business. He is not a Stinnes. He is perhaps more afraid of being dependent than eager to be independent; he is not trying to conquer new kingdoms so much as he is being forced into the imperialism inevitable to monarchs who would be absolutely supreme within their own kingdom.

New machinery can be worked out, and old cast aside; smaller businesses can be acquired, and

natural resources brought within the Ford circle. Perhaps no one ever subjected machinery more completely than Henry Ford. With men, we like to think, it is not as with machinery. Will meets will. But Henry Ford has almost no trouble with men. The answer is simple: only a very small part of a man works for Henry Ford. The range of a man's activity is enormously limited by machinery. A man can't do much harm in the Ford plant, because Henry Ford prides himself that his system of production is fool proof, which means that a fool can do the job about as well as a better man, and he can't do any harm by quitting, because there are five men waiting to grab his job. A job in his factory, says Ford, can be learned within a few days, or even a few hours. Forty-three percent of all the jobs require not over one day of training; thirty-six percent from one day to one week; only one percent require from one to six years. Obviously, the vast majority of the work is unskilled. More than that, it is repetitive to the highest degree. When Ford points with pride to the fact that in 1903 four times as many men were needed to produce a car as are required today it means above all that each man has been given a simpler and simpler set of motions, and that each set is repeated more and more times a day as the months go by.

Nearly every one has by now either seen or pic-

tured to himself the fascinating and horrible spectacle which is the making of the Ford car. Every one knows about the traveling conveyors, which carry the cylinder block just a little too fast past groups of men struggling to insert into it their assigned part. The speed of these conveyors is not constant. If all the departments of the plant are working smoothly, and an increase in production is desired, their speed is slightly increased at the beginning of the day, unknown to the men, who at the end of the day are aware only of being a little more tired than usual.

As one stands watching the process, what is going on does not seem to be labor, but something new, quite different, to which should be given another name. The men are not running the machines, but the machines are running the men, setting for them an inexorable pace with which they must hurry and struggle to keep up. The machines do so much, and each man so little. One can watch for a few minutes some sour-faced, frantically working old fellow who in a few minutes will have repeated forty or fifty times before your eyes the process he is to repeat all day long, every day of his life. Here work and creation, work and workmanship, are seen to have nothing in common. The man who puts in the screw does not screw it down, the man who screws it down does not give it the final tightening.

The harassed, driven look which people often mistakenly imagine they see in the faces of machine workers is, this time, obviously present. Only a certain kind of man will willingly work in this way. The more intelligent automobile workers in Detroit are eloquent on the subject of the Ford "slaves," and many of them prefer less pay in some more easy-going plant to this jungle of belts and machinery and rush and worry where twelve hours' work is crammed into eight.

The Ford plant is the despair of union organizers. They can make no dent on it. For there is a certain kind of man who does not mind endless repetition. Some people believe that a possibility for creative work, or workmanship, is innate in all men. Henry Ford knows this to be untrue. He knows that there exists a type of man who is more contented performing endless repetitions than doing anything else—except nothing at all. In his plant the proportion of such men to others who might enjoy workmanship is unknown, but it must be high. And nobody knows how many of the Ford employees are discontented, miserable, under the strain. Henry Ford doesn't care. He gives them steady employment, and good wages for eight hours, a lot more, he points out, than do most employers. The fact of their employment weighs

much more with him than the possibility of their discontent.

Partly through experience, partly because his whole life has been the assumption of responsibility, Henry Ford believes that most men avoid responsibility. His industry is run accordingly, partly because of his belief, mostly because the heaviest responsibility is shared by him and by his machinery. Certainly there is very little human scope or consent in the system. It is a vast and rigid pyramid, inflexibly broadening from a determined point to an obedient base, an inexorable structure of authority and machinery, in which human bees may come and go without harm to the hive. Even the foreman, whose petty despotism is the curse both of labor's morale and of efficiency in so many industries, is comparatively powerless here. He cannot hire, he cannot fire. Indeed it is a boast of the Ford system that nobody is ever fired. A man is transferred, he is disciplined by being sent to the heat and dirt of the foundry, but he is not fired. He is subjected to all sorts of humiliations until he resigns (particularly if he is fairly high up in the organization), but he is not fired. In a wholesale clean-up and lopping-off of only semi-essential departments at one time, a number of skilled draughtsmen, some of whom had been earning eighty to a

hundred dollars a week, found their department gone overnight. They were not fired. They were offered mildly skilled or unskilled jobs elsewhere at five dollars a day. When the legal department was canned, the young lawyers were offered manual jobs. But not fired. A curious kink in the mind of this industrial autocrat.

These inconsistencies, some charming, some ludicrous, some pathetic, some rather sinister, are to be found more often in the Henry Ford who has strayed from the quick production of cheap automobiles into the more public waters of peace, agriculture, finance, politics. The mind of Henry Ford is the home of a number of brilliant, vagrant or absurd ideas which are not always followed by performance. On the home ground of his performance with automobiles Henry Ford is more himself. I shall oversimplify him by saying that his most steadfast trait is an autocratic will born of obstinacy, shrewdness, self-confidence and success. If any important truth can be laid down about Henry Ford, it is his profound dislike and mistrust of the minds and wills of others when in conflict with his own. A good many able men who worked with him in early days have left him. This group—which Dean Marquis in his penetrating study calls the Ford Alumni Association—is the center of a great controversy. From the charges and counter-

charges that without them Ford would be nothing, that they all developed swelled heads, that Ford cannot allow any one to approach his own stature in authority, that Ford, minus all of them today, is doing better than ever, it seems possible to infer, what is borne out by so much else in his life: that Henry Ford cannot compromise with other minds, that his own will and purpose must remain intact or be defeated, that he cannot submit, or argue, or convince, or perform any of the more pliable and social functions of the mind. Some lightning flash of the mind, some instantaneous intuition, shows him the path, and he must follow it obstinately, sometimes mistakenly, and not listen to the counsel of doubt, or his purpose will be weakened, and destroyed. His strength he perhaps feels to be in those flashes, he must trust to them rather than to reason, and rightly he has kept from him the poison of the reasoning of others. His instinct of self-preservation has led him to fight shy of men whose brains collide with and maim his power to guess quickly, intensively. Dependence on the thought of others would sterilize his own. "I don't like to read much," he says; "books muddle me."

If Henry Ford allowed himself to reason too much, or filled his own original cross-lots mind with second-hand ideas, he might damage that sixth sense which is his best friend. His intuition has placed

him beyond that necessity of learning which confronts ordinary human beings—who, for lack of a native compass inside themselves, must go painfully reasoning through life. What in other people we would call ideas are in Ford's case more often violent prejudices or brilliant hunches.

Ford's ideas about the conduct of industry are based on his own success, and of course biassed by it. If one finds in them an excess of impatience and more emphasis on possibilities than regard for present conditions, this is only natural in a man who has done with enormous success so many things which other men told him he was crazy to attempt. Where others have relied on outside aid for financing, Ford's business has grown independently of banks because he has always turned a huge share of the profits back into the business. Where other manufacturers have followed the general trend of prices, and held on tight in a depression, Ford made a big slash in the price of his cars when business was at its worst. The numerous price cuts, while so kind to the consumer, have always resulted in larger profits. They were "just my way of being selfish," says Ford; "greed is nearsightedness." The rules for his own success he applies mercilessly to others: if a concern cannot supply him with parts at a certain price without cutting wages, it is their fault; a well-run business, to his mind, can always pay good

wages. If a man cannot make his business pay, he should quit. "Anything that will not work," he says,* "should be broken." Since the field he entered was virgin, of course, he is impatient with the common acceptance of the business cycle. One of the most interesting experiments possible would be to place Henry Ford in control of some old established industry, one completely entangled in the network of basic production. He has bought coal mines and a railroad, to be sure, but that was because they interfered with our plans. Could the mind which has been applied to a new industry break up and reorganize an old one? How would the creator of the Highland Park factory cut the price of coal lower and lower every year?

What Ford has to say about money springs from his own experience, an experience limited by his independence of money. About money he has held the most elementary notions. At one time he was suddenly about to withdraw several millions from a bank, and hoard them himself in gold, and only with some difficulty was the network of the credit system explained to him. One of his associates once remarked that "if Henry told me he had found a way to run his cars on water, I'd believe him; and

* This and some other quotations are from *My Life and Work*, by Henry Ford, in collaboration with Samuel Crowther (Doubleday, Page & Company).

if I told him that all the pennies in his bank had turned to gold, he'd believe me."

Ford is not often ready to believe others, but when he does, his credulity is intense. The obverse of credulity is suspicion, and he is deeply suspicious of our financial system, in which he has never become involved, but which has brushed him menacingly more than once. And so to him money seems a curse imposed upon business; non-producing stockholders appear as downright parasites, and the gold-standard as a "class-advantage." He would like to see paper issued against our natural resources, and can be set down pretty definitely as a soft-money man. "Money is simple," he says, and its function as the master rather than the servant of industry is thoroughly bad. The resentment is sound, but the understanding incomplete.

Before Henry Ford found opportunity to follow his mechanical bent, he had to work on the farm, and he hated it. The inefficiency of the farm and the drudgery of the farm have been constantly on his mind. The wide sale of his tractors lies as close to his heart as any of his enterprises. People who do not work on farms sentimentalize about them, and have been shocked at Henry Ford's blasting criticism. "What would you do about the farm?" Allan Benson asked him (see his book, *The New Henry Ford*). "The first thing to do is to tear

down all the fences," he answered. "But what about the animals overrunning the crops?" "There wouldn't be any animals," said Ford. We all remember his startling announcement, some years before, that "the cow must go." Much earlier than that, when he was driving his first car about Detroit, he remarked that "the horse was doomed." With such slow animals, consuming even when they are not at work, Ford has no patience. The hope for the farm is machines, and electricity, and production on a larger scale: he would like to see it "industrialized." Just as he has cut down the number of men and hours required to make an automobile, so, he believes, can he cut down the number of men and hours necessary to raise a crop. The farm, in his opinion, is about five percent efficient, and all that is now produced there in a year could be produced in a total of twenty-five days. What about the rest of the time? His answer is ready: have a sufficient number of industries near by in which the farmers can work when the crops have been planted or harvested. There won't be any stock to feed and water, so the farmer won't have to go home every day.

There are many cases where one would like to give Ford the power to put his ideas into practice. In the realm of general ideas, on the other hand, one strikes a very different Henry Ford, obstinate,

sincere as ever, but pathetically floundering in strange waters. He has found out by now, I suspect, that there are some waters in which he had better not try to swim. On the land of his own experience he is safe, but he often does not know when he has left it and begun to wade. The most famous example is, of course, the Peace Ship. As simple as Ford's attempted remedy for the war was his explanation of it. "Take away the capitalist," he said some months before the Peace Ship, "and you sweep war from the earth." Later—this was still before he sailed—he narrowed the term "capitalist" down to the "Jewish international bankers." Those around him have hastened to make a difference between the "Jewish international bankers" and other Jews not so employed, pointing out that since Mr. Ford has many Jews working for him, and a Jewish architect, and many Jewish friends, he has no prejudice against Jews as such. But in talking to Mr. Ford it is obvious that, being of a simpler construction of mind, divisions of a subject do not come easily to him, and that when he says, "The Jews are the scavengers of the world," he means what he says, and no more, because that is the full extent of his thought on the matter. From a hunch it has grown into an explanation with many applications, and hardened into a cherished obsession.

There are many such notions growing in the rich soil of Ford's ignorance. An obstinate, willful ignorance, because when Ford has to learn something, he does. He doesn't often have to learn; instead he can usually feel what is the right thing to do. He will not tolerate experts, who, he says, are only good for telling you what can't be done. Since from ignorance proceeds so much of his strength, why should he care for knowledge of what has already happened—for history? When he said that "history is bunk," he was quite right, as far as he was concerned. Under cross-questions at the Mount Clemens trial he felt no shame at all; he was profoundly bored, and rather inattentive. When asked for dates he didn't know them, when asked about "government" he replied, "It's a long subject," and he insisted that for all these questions he "could find a man in five minutes to answer them." When some one after the examination tried to get him to understand what a poor showing he had made, he wanted to know what it mattered whether the street they were walking on was sixty feet wide, or sixty-five. The fun that was poked at him could not break down his confidence in himself, his indifference to facts and histories, ignorance of which had somehow not prevented his being worth a billion dollars. Attempts to coach him in the a-b-c of American history found him a poor pupil. He has

not allowed his son Edsel to go to college. He doesn't care whether his employees are "graduates of Sing Sing or of Harvard." He is indefatigable in technical research which will result in cheaper, lighter, better materials for the Ford car, but scientific research, or research in general into the inner works of a world he knows to be all wrong, has not interested him in the slightest. A man who is convinced that he has a private key to Utopia cannot be interested in founding a college of locksmiths.

"What is the secret of Henry Ford?" people often ask, and expect an answer as complete and simple as if one lifted the mainspring out of a watch to show them how it worked. Of the many answers that have been given ("He's a mechanic," "He's a farmer," "He's a sort of economic John the Baptist") no one answer can be true, and even taken all together they are far from the truth, for Henry Ford is the sum of a great number of contradictory things which by their nature cannot be added up.

The manufacturer and business man in him is bold, hard-headed, obstinate, flexible and ruthless. That part of him which has said and done a great deal that is quite aside from his business, reveals unplumbable depths of idealism, suspicion, good will, simple-mindedness, foresight, credulity, imag-

ination and utter lack of it. He cannot be judged by what he has done, for what he has done in general he has often done the reverse of in particular, nor can he be judged by what he has said, for what he says may not correspond with what he thinks, and in the common acceptance of the word he does not think at all. From the distance of the factory or of the outbursts quoted in the newspapers Ford may seem comprehensible—even if the factory is complicated, and the outbursts bewildering. But when one has passed those public and visible outposts to find that the owner of the factory is a good deal like a small boy with a toy, and the author of the quotations very much like an old farmer sitting on a fence ready to pass pithy judgment on anything in the world—then Ford becomes a real puzzle. Then one learns that there is no "secret" of his character, but only clews to it.

One of the most helpful clews to any man's personality is his experience. Ford's narrow but profound experience hangs over almost all that he does like a shadow. He moves forward, normally, in this shadow, and when he ventures out of it he is blinded. At times it seems impossible that so capable a man should have strayed so little beyond the boundaries of his own experience, that a man who has done so much to a big world should still manage to live in such a small one. The terms he has

learned in his world are those in which he thinks of the world outside. It was like him to say of religion that he "believed in it, but didn't work at it much," and that "when a man dies, it means that a part has worn out."

An example of how Ford may not grasp an idea until put into his own terms, is the story of the early days of the *Dearborn Independent.* Not long after he had bought it, Ford found out that, as is the way with newspapers, Brown was writing news articles, Jones was contributing editorials, and Smith humorous sketches. Ford went to the editor, and, with his own conveyors in the back of his mind, told him that each article should be treated as a unit, and as it moved across the editorial desk —like an ungarnished cylinder-block—Brown should attach the news to it, Jones screw on the opinion, and Smith insert the humor. The editor—also with the conveyors in the back of his mind, replied: "No, Mr. Ford, don't you see, the magazine is the unit, and not each article. As the magazine comes along, Brown's news article goes into it, then Jones's editorial, then Smith's piece of humor." Ford understood this, and went away satisfied.

Generosity and the reverse of it, openness and secretiveness, tolerance and prejudice characterize his relations with other people. It is quite like him to remark that so-and-so "is a good man, but he

eats too much," and from Ford, who only eats when he is hungry, this is serious criticism. Neither does he smoke. So smoking is absolutely barred in the factory, and even in the office. Several of his best lieutenants could not give up the habit. "They'll smoke themselves out," said Ford, and those men have left him long ago. They weren't fired, neither did they freely resign. Ford has his own way of smoking people out when their usefulness has expired. One of the heads of departments made a phenomenally rapid rise, announced that he would give courses in the methods of his department, and assumed a rather too distinct rôle within the company. Then he began to discover that gradually his functions and authority were being invisibly whittled away. When he could stand it no longer he said to Ford: "Am I the head of this department or am I not?" and was told: "No, you are not, and you haven't been for the last two years." He resigned. Another man who was driven to the same point stayed away from the office three days in disgust, then made an appointment with Ford to talk things over. He turned up, but Ford never came. When told later how the other fellow had been kept waiting, Ford only laughed: "Ha, ha! That's funny."

No regular business man would have said that. Nobody but Ford would have. And just as the

regular business man has his routine, his office hours, his mail, his appointments, his golf, so Ford's day is something quite different, and quite his own. He will get up very early, and perhaps chop a tree, often not eating anything till the middle of the morning. Then climb into the little wire wheel Ford coupé, and drive like the mischief down to the River Rouge plant, or somewhere in his factories where something new is going on. He may go down to the river to see Edsel's new power boat, and perhaps avoid the office altogether all day long, though people may be waiting there to see him. If it is summer, we may find him giving orders not to cut the crop on the farm until some fledglings he has seen in nests on the ground have grown strong enough to fly; if winter, he may be skating, with great skill and energy, or taking a walk, and jumping all the fences. If indoors, he will kick as high as the chandelier to show friends he still can do it, or cook for them a meal of synthetic foods in his laboratory, or turn on one of his vast collection of mechanical musical instruments, or even sit down to the automatic organ, which he likes to play with all the stops pulled out. He doesn't like to read, and still "wouldn't give five cents for art." Work is amusement for him. Perhaps he has never known what work is, in the ordinary sense. He can never grow weary of watching things happen, wheels go

around, and he is as engrossed in all his vast network of machinery as if it were a toy, and he himself young enough to worry about nothing else. And while he enjoys it, he takes awfully good care that the toy stays well oiled, and makes more and more money every year.

Golden Rule Nash

The story of How Golden Rule Nash Came to the Union is not an ordinary story of a union, an employer and wage earners. It is a story which must be told chiefly for its own sake, and for the uncommon mixture of skill, sincerity, shrewdness and evangelism which it presents. The scene is Cincinnati, that featureless hive of miscellaneous industry which calls itself Queen City, a city comparatively untouched by the immigration of foreign labor, stolid, slow-growing, dingy, full of hard, homely faces, and spiritually just on the fringe of the great belt where a hell-fire religion is still believed in. The protagonists are three: about two thousand factory hands, two-thirds of them women, the most intelligent labor union in the country, and one of the most curious personalities in American industry.

Mr. Arthur Nash is about fifty-five years old. He was brought up a Seventh Day Adventist, and for a long while believed (in his own words) that "all churches, save only the Seventh Day Adventist, constitute Babylon and are spurned of God," and that at the second coming of Christ "only one hundred and forty-four thousand of all people

then living on this earth will be saved"—all of them Seventh Day Adventists. In those days Mr. Nash could instantly detect any misquotation of a passage from the King James version of the New Testament. Suddenly he lost his faith, was thrown out of the church, turned to the atheists, drank deep of Bob Ingersoll and Tom Paine "in order to bolster up my contempt for religion." He became a hobo, hopped on and off freight trains, worked as a hod carrier, a plasterer, in a broom factory, with a bridge construction gang, opened a laundry business in Detroit. The church people began to give their business to his laundry, and not long afterward religion returned into the soul of Mr. Nash. He became a minister in the Disciples of Christ. Once again, as the result of preaching a eulogistic memorial sermon for an unbeliever, he was cast out. He took a job selling clothes; "it took but a short time to demonstrate the fact that I was a far better salesman than preacher." In June, 1916, the A. Nash Tailoring Company was organized, with a capital of $60,000. In 1918 Mr. Nash bought up one of his contracting garment makers, the wages in whose shop (a shop running at full capacity) were from $4 a week up, and not very far up. Mr. Nash increased them 300 percent all around. Not long afterward he discovered that the shop was turning out three times as much clothing as before.

What had happened? The Golden Rule had been reborn, and made concretely manifest to the employees. Mr. Nash had told them, as he raised their wages, that he wanted them to work just as they would want him to work if they were in the office paying the wages, and he were in the shop making the clothes.

The Golden Rule worked. It has, to believe Mr. Nash, been working ever since, though there is no doubt that it has had several useful allies. From whatever cause, the business grew and grew. In one year it tripled; from 1919 to 1920 it tripled again, and again in 1923, and from 1923 to 1925, once more it tripled. This year it bids fair to come close to twenty million dollars. Only two or three clothing manufacturers have a larger output, in volume or in units.

A word as to the Nash product. It is a durable, reasonably good-looking suit of clothes, cut and sewed in the factory to your measure, for exactly twenty-three dollars, and shipped to you, C. O. D., wherever you are in the United States. It is just as good as a lot of suits for which you will be asked to pay from thirty to forty dollars by the average retailer. Fifty-five percent of the twenty-three dollars you pay is for the actual cost of the woolen material and the trimmings, another 20 percent is for the cost of the labor, and the rest is distributed

among overhead, administrative and selling costs, the salesman's commission and the small margin of profit. The suit is cheap because the manufacturing cost, being spread over many hundred thousands of suits in a factory operating somewhat after the Ford plan, is unusually low, but chiefly because the huge items of advertising, high-powered salesmen and profit to the retailer are completely eliminated. Each Nash salesman, of whom there are about two thousand scattered over the country, gets his sample case and $3.50 for every suit he sells, and not a cent more. These men are not salesmen in the usual sense; they do not "cover territory" in Pullmans and hand in expense accounts. They sell suits within a few dozen miles of where they live, to their friends and acquaintances; they are generally the kind of people who are content to pick up a smallish income, and a great many of them sell the Nash Line only in their spare time, being regularly devoted to some other calling. No group of men could be found better able to extend their religious zeal up to and beyond that point where "all these other things shall be added unto you." They sincerely feel that in selling suits made according to the Golden Rule they are bringing the kingdom nearer. Mr. Nash, it must be pointed out, is in no danger of letting their zeal die out for lack of fuel. His energy is duly reflected in their loyalty, and

something of his philosophy in the "Nashional songs" they sing when assembled in convention. This stanza from "Take Out the Nash Line," "respectfully dedicated to Mr. Otis Brown, manager of the Philadelphia branch," was sung on July 6, 1925, to the tune of "Throw Out the Life Line":

> Take out the Nash line, go see the last man,
> Tell 'em and sell 'em wherever you can,
> The Golden Rule first, the clothes will sell, too,
> And money and friends you will make if you do.

In what did this Golden Rule consist, at its face value as reported by Mr. Nash himself and his many friends, employees, and ministers of the Gospel? The employees were supposed to be getting wages higher than usual in Christian America. They were enslaved to no time-clock, and were not fined for lateness. They were said to work from thirty-four to forty-four hours a week. We have Mr. Nash's word for it that they owned pretty nearly half of the company's million dollars' worth of stock. They were made to feel that they had the right to express themselves about their jobs at any time. Meetings of the whole plant were frequently called, by Mr. Nash, the foreman and even the workers themselves. When Mr. Nash spoke to them he called them Brother and Sister. There was no union; there seemed to be no need for one.

There was not even a company union, unless in spirit, and it would be more accurate to describe whatever loose organization existed as something between a family union and a congregation. The employees seemed contented with no more formal understanding between themselves and their employer than a reiteration of Matthew VII:12: Therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. Mr. Nash made his Golden Rule, and also his factory and his clothes, famous all over the country through countless speeches and trips of his own and through generous free advertising afforded him by the news value of his experiment.

The first sight of the interior of the A. Nash Tailoring Company, about equally divided between the vast carcasses of the former Joe Magnus Whiskey Distillery and what used to be the Moerlein Brewery, is depressing. One looks about for concrete evidence of the Golden Rule. One watches in vain for that expression on the faces of the men and women bent furiously over sewing machines and steam presses which Mr. Nash describes as happy. The coats, vests, pants and overcoats travel through the various assembling processes with an inexorable gait which reminds one of the Ford plant. Everywhere is speed, hurry, crowded elbows, clothes, clothes, more clothes piling up. It

is a sight to be found in most factories where large scale production is carried on. It does not strike one as different from or much better than the average, but it is not necessarily worse. To a superficial and untrained eye such a hasty glimpse amounts to little more than an impression, and more is to be learned from a closer look at Mr. Nash himself than from the factory.

Arthur Nash is a sturdy, white-haired, pink-cheeked, self-made man, with an eye at once piercing and far-away, and great powers of fiery speech. He subdues you with a bluff fervor that passes quickly from religion to cost accounting, and back again. He is an intense and often seductive evangelist, for whom religion is not a private or intimate matter, but a public battle, requiring vocal passion, platforms, slogans, travel and organization. The preacher in him dominates—not one of your bland, sotto voce valets of the Lord's attire upon earth, but a good, old-fashioned, belligerent camp-meeting revivalist, uproariously eloquent and afraid of nothing. Beside his desk are a few books—for books have not meant much in his life, his education having been religion—*An Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Handbook of the Western Methodist Conference,* the Koran, and Paul Douglas on *Wages and the Family.* His words are direct, rough-hewn, downright, often picturesque, with a

kind of camp-meeting frenzy and exaggeration. He can command effects which would do credit to any United States Senator. But there is nothing pompous about him, nothing of the ordinary employer. The blood which ran hot when he was a hobo, when he was organizing the Plasterer's Union into the Knights of Labor still beats within him; in many, but not all, corners of his heart he has remained, in the best sense, a common man. He seems not only genuinely, but at times ferociously, to believe that labor is paramount to capital. He has been known to give, by his single-handed powers of speech, great aid to labor organizations in different parts of the country. He has stopped strikes which he stumbled across while on tour, he has refused help to other employers whose men were out. Once, he recalls "a big square-toed detective came to my plant looking for Bolsheviki. 'Stop right here,' I said, 'I'm the Bolshevik. The only discontented spirit in the place is right here in this office.' " He exclaims: "I don't see any place I can build the Utopia of the Man of Galilee except in the Labor Movement." He is given to sudden, broad-minded impulses: he has on several occasions taken criminals, or the relatives of criminals to whom no one else would give a job, into his employ; he has subscribed large sums to establish a sort of Y. M. C. A. for young Turks in Turkey, not in

order to Christianize them, but "to make better Turks out of them." And with all this, he is extraordinarily shrewd. He knows his business, and he knows that the kind of reputation he and his factory have acquired help to sell clothes.

Why, it was asked, since he believes so much in the rights of labor, why doesn't Mr. Nash allow his employees to become organized? For several years the Amalgamated Clothing Workers had had their eye on Mr. Nash and his two thousand employees. His was one of the last large plants remaining outside the union. Now the Amalgamated is the only union that has thought out an industrial policy as well as the simpler matters of the technique of organization, how and when to strike, wage scales and hours. It believes that the health of the union and the welfare of its members depend upon the health of the industry as a whole. It has built up a delicate, complicated, flexible and powerful mechanism within the industry whereby, instead of the usual union procedure of periodic demands and complete lack of contact in between times, difficulties are dealt with as they arise, and before they arise. It has usually managed to raise wages and cut down labor costs simultaneously. It could present Mr. Nash with a great many good reasons why he should allow his factory to be organized.

An employer who thinks that his own factory is

an example of Christian equality to the rest of the country, and who is told as much on all sides, is not likely to embrace union organization at once, if at all, even though, as in Mr. Nash's case, a feeling for union labor be rooted strong in his own past. For several years past Mr. Nash had been discussing the possibility with the union's president, Sidney Hillman, now hospitably, now doubtfully. In the meanwhile Amalgamated organizers had been at work trying to sign up the Nash workers piecemeal, from the outside, according to the usual trade union tactics. In the course of this campaign, while Mr. Nash and Mr. Hillman seemed on the point of reaching a preliminary agreement, some pamphlets were issued by the local organizers attacking Mr. Nash and the failure of his vaunted Golden Rule to square with conditions as they existed in the plant. The Nash employees, so we are told, objected violently to the pamphlets, objected to the Amalgamated, and a petition was circulated, and adopted by the employees, calling on Mr. Nash to discharge any of themselves who joined the union thereafter. Mr. Nash tearfully pleaded with them, said that he could not thus let down his friend Sidney Hillman, but all bets were off.

Mr. Nash is sensitive to the opinion of others. One of his sharpest impressions, and one that surely has had enormous effect on his dealings with the

union, was received as the result of a speech he made to a large convention of business men in explanation of the workings of his Golden Rule. A business man congratulated him and proposed a "rising vote of thanks for the greatest scheme of defeating union labor ever seen." This stung Mr. Nash deeply. And Mr. Nash was profoundly affected when a religious conference meeting at Olivet, Michigan, in July of last year, numbering many of his religious friends and supporters was persuaded, though with difficulty, upon detailed evidence submitted as to the conditions in the Nash plant, to adopt a resolution calling for an investigation.

The upshot was that Mr. Nash, after considering the possibilities of the fossil counterpart of the Amalgamated within the A. F. of L., the United Garment Workers, made known his readiness to be unionized. A dramatic meeting was held before practically all the employees in a Cincinnati theater. The employees were evidently against joining the union, and many of them came marching in wearing buttons labeled Don't Give up the Rule. A violent speech by one of the company's vice-presidents made the opposition even stronger. Mr. Sidney Hillman presented the case for the union. At last Mr. Nash himself, facing what he felt to be over-

whelming opposition, with true revivalist zeal and more than common courage turned the tables into a majority for joining the Amalgamated. In December the decision was formally ratified, this time unanimously. An agreement was drafted similar to all other agreements arrived at between the Amalgamated and employers. Mr. Nash accepted it without question, even requesting, on his own initiative, that a clause for unemployment insurance be inserted. The battle was won, and all the Nash employees are members of the Amalgamated, with the exception of a bare handful of Seventh Day Adventists, whose creed does not allow them to join a labor organization.

Never before was a plant similarly organized. But then there is no labor union as patient or as shrewd as the Amalgamated, and, above all, there never was any one exactly like Arthur Nash. Having been in the throes of uncertainty, having advanced and retreated and delayed, now that at last he is in, he is in way over his ears, enthusiastically, militantly, in a glorious splash of total immersion. To hear him and Sidney Hillman on the improvised platform in the coat shop, surrounded by sewing machines, basted garments, and upturned, rather puzzled faces, one would take him rather than Hillman for the labor leader, so fiery is his

evangelism, so whole-hearted and bitter his attack upon the coal barons, so molten his allegiance to unionism.

Those upturned faces, weary and silent and good-natured—what is their feeling at being plunged wholesale into as strange a thing to them as a union? When they didn't understand it they feared and rejected it, particularly when Mr. Nash was lukewarm himself; when he suddenly became ardent, they could not change all at once, but when they came around under his spell, they came around, to all appearances, completely. Now that they are union members, do they accept it? Probably not altogether. There is still too much to be learned.

The spectacular part of the meeting between Mr. Nash and the Amalgamated is over; the hard work begins. The work of making the employees understand what kind of a union it is, and what it is for; the more difficult work of fitting Golden Rule standards and conditions with union wages, union conditions, a slow, a diplomatic, and an unending job.

What happens from now on among the Nash employees, and to Mr. Nash, will be less dramatic than the prologue, less visible to the eye, but the most interesting part of it all. Chapter One is being written now.

Lincoln

The mists that have been closing between us and the figure of the real Washington ever since Gilbert Stuart decided that the left side of his face best represented the Father of a Country, and turned out some thirty-odd copies and variations of his portrait of it, have not yet closed over Lincoln. If Stuart had thought better of his illuminating version of the long, shrewd, unsensitive and incorruptible right side of that grand old physiognomy, and not so well of a prim, powdered and immortal sphinx, we might have been spared something of the strained legend that runs from Cherry Tree to a frozen finality on the two-cent stamp. Fortunately, Lincoln is still fairly visible. Yet a legend will inevitably grow up about him too, and the nobly twisted oak will be hidden under a parasitic vine of idealization, ignorance, and apotheosis. Lincoln was great—nobody disputes that. But we want to believe that he was always great; we rebel at the thought that he might never have become great, or even less than that, a chance interesting head above the surface. We shrink at the idea that he carried within himself the seeds of uncertainty, despair, mediocrity. We explain away these burdens as

flaws sometimes attractive, always pardonable, in a man unaccountably, but indisputably, chosen by destiny for a great place. We are more inclined to think him great in spite of his handicaps than because he lived with them and outgrew them. He was "great"; once that has been admitted, we can safely give him a great man's allowance of peculiarity. And once we have allowed him a few negative traits we can forget them, and confine ourselves to his greatness, which we make less great by this forgetfulness. Here is the beginning of legend.

At its simplest, the legend is something like this: Abraham Lincoln was a poor rail-splitter and country lawyer who rose to be president of the United States, almost miraculously, just as the country needed a man who was wise, brave, and forgiving. He saved the Union, he freed the slaves, he wrote the Gettysburg address, the Second Inaugural, and a letter to Mrs. Bixby. He was cruelly murdered by Booth in Ford's Theater. Booth tripped and broke his leg, crying, "Sic semper tyrannis." Of all our many great presidents Lincoln was perhaps the greatest except Washington and either Roosevelt or Wilson, but not both.

Intelligent Americans who have about as much as that in mind—and they are many—may have added another dimension to their conception of Lincoln by knowledge of his treatment of Chase, or a

third dimension through accidental reading of his letter to General Hooker. But on the whole even intelligent Americans are ready for a legend. How ready, we learned a few years ago when George Gray Barnard's statue was furiously assailed as a hideous scarecrow. Our idea of Lincoln was that of Saint Gaudens, or something even more, in Stanton's phrase, the property of the ages. We were already part of those ages ourselves, so Lincoln's nobility, perhaps more than his humanity, was our unassailable property too. The quarrel went deeper than a mere opposition between the partisans of a faithfulness to the body and the partisans of a faithfulness to the soul. It was more than a disagreement between some who were sure that the statesman could not possibly have been as ugly as Barnard's rail-splitter and others equally sure that the rail-splitter could not possibly have looked as statesmanlike as Saint-Gaudens made him out. It was essentially a fight between two extremes of the legend already growing up, between the wing which saw in the poor awkward laborer's rise a vindication of democracy and the wing which saw in the fortunate miracle of a great man's guidance during civil war a vindication of belief in destiny's watchfulness over America. Either view provided more gilt for a legend. Those who sought to avoid legends were tempted to prefer neither statue

to the other, but both at once, seeing in the pair, one awkward, the other noble, something symbolic of immortal qualities gradually self-hammered into perfection, slowly, almost reluctantly brought out from their hiding place within the possibility of failure, blight, mediocrity. The Lincolns suggested by the two statues are not in contrast; they are inseparable if we are considering the span of his whole life.

On the whole, Lincoln has been well served by his biographers, and no legend can survive an intelligent reading of them. Yet how much better those books would have been, and how much more remarkable a Lincoln would have sprung from them, could they have been written free from the shadow of his accepted greatness. Since the fact of his moral and intellectual eminence rises plainly from the barest recital of his acts and words, it is a pity that his biographers so humanly succumbed to a preoccupation with that fact and with its proof. The invaluable Nicolay and Hay are ponderously official, in twelve volumes, and obsessed with their chronicle as history. Their Lincoln is so much the President who happens to be a man and so little a man who happens to be the President. Herndon, with his flashes of revelation, his chasms of fatuity, his sense of his old law partner's immortal fame struggling with an anecdotal, human, humorous

past. Then the able compiler, Charnwood, whose sifting of the original sources remains the best life of them all. And lately, a stimulating, at times very moving, but opinionated study by Prof. Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, often nearer to his subject than Charnwood, but less well balanced, and far too much tempted by speculations, some of which are illuminating, others quite groundless.*

Over all of them hangs the shadow of Lincoln's greatness. At times this knowledge prompts the biographer to deeper scrutiny, profounder writing than might have been occasioned by the same acts of an admittedly lesser man. At other times this knowledge leads them into deprecating morasses of soft-footed conjecture about why Lincoln did certain things he ought not to have done, or equally conscious ratiocinations about the reasons for something he did extremely well. And all of them tarnish and dilute his greatness by the admixture of their own moral judgments.

We would give a good deal for that impossible thing, a good account of Lincoln's life up to 1860 (or even the first half of 1862), and written by some one whose knowledge of him ceased with that year. Could such a biographer have predicted the

* *Lincoln*, by Nathaniel Wright Stephenson. Indianapolis and New York, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

kind of man who was to emerge from the war? Barring the debates with Douglas, and a few other speeches, there was very little on which one might build hopes for what was actually to come. The ungainly, slow-moving figure, awkward almost to ugliness, unnaturally tall when he was standing, the height of other men when he was sitting down, who went to Niagara and only "wondered where all that water came from"; who loved to stop people on the street with a new story, often very coarse; whose body and mind "worked slowly, as if they needed oiling"; who read hardly any law, and was likely to win a case only if his sympathies were completely enlisted, and after long preparation; who spent hours locked in his office in gloomy contemplation; who did practically nothing as a congressman in Washington; whose friends more than once feared for his mind, and who was frequently sunk deep in the blackest, most unproductive, morbid depression. Great gifts one might have seen lurking in him, flashes of mind, and a good heart, but one might as easily have felt them foredoomed to wither in luckless, self-mistrustful soil.

It is clear now by what a narrow margin Lincoln escaped eclipse at the hands of his own uncertainty and lack of ambition, and by what happy accidents he slipped into a position where the best in him could be forged on the anvil of events. Had he

chosen to go west as governor of the Territory of Oregon, would he be anything more than an obscure name to us today? And he became President almost by accident too. Seward was the obvious choice, and since the Democratic split made a Republican victory practically certain, it was perhaps not indispensable to have a candidate from the west for the sake of the western vote. We still do not know just what wires the Lincoln managers pulled at the convention, but the appointment of Cameron as Secretary of War raises more than a suspicion that the convention's decision was as much the result of intrigue as of reason. To those men Lincoln seemed a good candidate; some of them may have felt he was a great man as well, but he was chosen because he was a good candidate, and one from the western state of Illinois. By accident, their satisfactory candidate turned out to be the greatest of Presidents, or perhaps of all Americans.

He did not turn out so to be at once. For months after his inauguration there was vacillation, uncertainty, mistake after mistake, particularly in the judgment of individual men. At times Lincoln's humility, which he never lost and which later became one of the cornerstones of his greatness, was pathetic, as on that occasion when McClellan, at whose house Lincoln used to call instead of summoning him, came in while the President was wait-

ing, only to send down word that he was tired and had gone to bed. "Did Stanton say I was a damned fool?" Lincoln remarked. "Then probably I am, because Stanton is usually right." And we find him requiring one general to consult the judgment of another "with my own poor mite added." This humility never disappeared. But side by side with it there grew a power to take counsel in the gravest matters of all with himself alone, to make momentous decisions with a finality all the more majestic for having been acquired slowly, at the price of infinite solitary thought.

Under the fire of tragedy and effort, indecision melted away, and aimless depression was refined into the clarity of unplumbable sadness. No one will ever know what alchemy was taking place, in the darkest days of the war, when those about him were profoundly moved by his spirit's infinite misery, when he walked the lonely streets with one companion, on those nights of more than human melancholy when "the long legs were always cold." Out of such torture he rose to new heights, calm, tired but indefatigable, to words spoken that we can never forget, not only prose as fine as any, but a true mirror of the man who uttered it. One feels most respect for him when that respect is mingled with affection. But affection, reverence, respect, are worn and feeble words to express our feelings

for a man who shows us what powers for growth and triumph lie within the human spirit.

Most men never truly feel the weight of life, or else flatten under the load. Some achieve the useful hardness of coal, while a few, a very few, under terrible pressure bring forth the brilliant and immortal diamonds of the soul.

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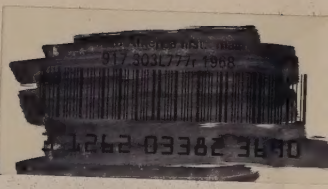
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